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A Jordanian man puts up a poster of King Hussein riding a motorcycle with Queen Noor in Amman yesterday, in preparation for nationwide celebrations today on the king's return from medical treatment in the US. (Reuters)

Tumultuous welcome expected for Hussein today

By BEN LYNFIELD

AMMAN — Hundreds of thousands of Jordanians are expected to greet King Hussein in a national celebration today, when he returns home after six months of treatment for an illness that threatened to end his 45-year reign and raised concern about

Jordan's future.

"I am very happy about this," said Issam Kalanzi, owner of a heating company in Amman. "This is a sign of stability for the country."

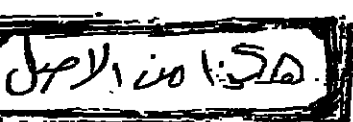
Kalanzi said he is looking forward to the opportunity to gauge first-hand whether the king is fully recovered — as his doctors have

said — from the non-Hodgkins lymphoma that was treated at the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota.

Hussein, after piloting his jet from London, is expected to touch down in Amman with his wife, Queen Noor, in the early afternoon.

See HUSSEIN, Page 2

NATO generals to warn Milosevic



today by Gen. Wesley Clark, supreme allied commander in Europe, and Gen. Klaus Naumann, a German who chairs the NATO military committee.

The tensions seemed to worsen with Yugoslavia's decision to expel William Walker, the American head of the Kosovo peace mission. "Nobody has informed me yet officially that I have been declared persona non grata. They could have had the decency to inform me personally about this," the independent B-92 radio quoted Walker as saying, "isolated into Serbian."

Full report, Page 7

Justice Theodor Orr, judge in Ohana case, denies all claims

By LIAT COLLINS

Supreme Court Justice Theodor Orr was the judge Yehiam Ohana claims convicted him 18 years ago under pressure from police who were allegedly blackmailing him for rape. Orr yesterday allowed his name to be disclosed.

Orr has denied all the accusations and said material he allegedly wrote, which was submitted by Ohana in his retrial request, was forged.

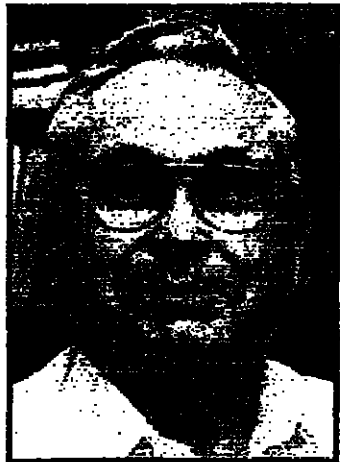
Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court Judge Zacharia Caspi yesterday extended Ohana's remand by a week.

He is suspected of forgery, fabricating evidence, and attempting to obstruct justice.

The charges relate to the material he submitted to support his retrial request over a two-year sentence for drug offenses. Ohana claims the police and lawyers framed him, while blackmailing Orr, to get the conviction, and in this way block the appointment of an acquaintance of Ohana's to a high police position.

Rahel Lev, the researcher who helped gather the material, is under house arrest.

Ohana's lawyer, Yossi Livne, told the court yesterday that the originals of the material submitted to Attorney-General Elyakim



Theodor Orr (Nitzan Shorer)

Rubinstein and considered by police — who have seen only the copies — to be forgeries in the process of being handed over via Ma'ariv, which broke the story.

Later, police said they had obtained a suitcase full of documents, shown on Channel 2 this week, which are meant to be the originals.

The Channel 2 reporter noted that many look much too new for 20-year-old documents, and there are other clearly visible discrepancies.

See ORR, Page 2

Showdown over voting rights in primaries

Ramon tells Barak he won't seek Labor slot

By DAVID ZEV HARRIS

Turmoil engulfed the Labor Party yesterday, as MK Haim Ramon told party chairman Ehud Barak and secretary-general Ra'anana Cohen he will not seek reelection. His move came after the party decided to alter voting rights in the upcoming primaries, according to senior party sources.

MK Nissim Zivli went one step further, and announced his resignation from the party, saying it has become a "one-man" show under Barak.

In a resignation letter highly critical of Barak, Zivli said he would be supporting Amnon Lipkin-Shahak's bid for the premiership.

Yet senior Labor MKs and workers were far more concerned by Ramon's latest U-turn.

On Sunday night, the party decided that grass-roots members would be allowed nine to 11 votes for candidates for Labor's Knesset list. Ramon had insisted members only be given seven-nine votes.

The feeling in Labor is that if members are only given a handful of votes, they will opt for familiar names, such as Uzi Baram and Ramon. The more votes are granted, the further down the list the

likes of Ramon could find themselves, as members will be more likely to push their own, lesser-known candidates up the list.

Last night, Ramon would only say that "the party central committee launched an election method which does not allow for a competition which will bring about the true wishes of party members."

"Ramon was exceptionally angry because voting agreements among him, Barak, and Shlomo Ben-Ami are simply being ignored," a political source close to Labor said last night. The source added that Ramon is convinced that the revised voting system will leave him in 15th or 16th position.

"Ramon is only staying in Labor for political reasons, if [Yitzhak] Mordechai decides to go to the center party, Ramon will leave Labor in a second," he added.

Barak, meanwhile, said Ramon is important to him and is a part of the party's leadership, but stressed that one cannot change democratic decisions of the party "even for an important figure such as Haim Ramon."

Immediately following his discussion with Barak, Ramon was joined in his office by MK Haggai Merom, who has already

left the party.

Sources close to Barak said he wants Ramon to remain inside Labor and is hopeful he can be persuaded to change his mind before the list of primary candidates closes at 4 p.m. on Thursday. Labor whip Elie Goldschmidt was called into Barak's Knesset office to ease the tension between Barak and Ramon. On leaving, Goldschmidt told reporters, "I'm looking to find a way to solve this."

Haim's place is in the party and he wants to stay here. I don't think he's looking for a way out."

Other Labor members suggested that Ramon is playing yet another game to improve his place on the list.

Ahead of last week's party convention, rumors in the party were rife that Ramon was about to leave Labor for Shahak's party.

See RAMON, Page 2

Not burning his bridges

ANALYSIS

The news from Labor yesterday was that Haim Ramon is sulking — not for the first time in recent weeks — and that former secretary-general Nissim Zivli is finally quitting the party he ran not so long ago.

Considering the antagonism which chairman Ehud Barak has been generating around him, he could have expected far worse. If Barak's luck holds out, and he holds on to Ramon, then he will have gotten off pretty cheaply, having lost only Zivli and MK Haggai Merom.

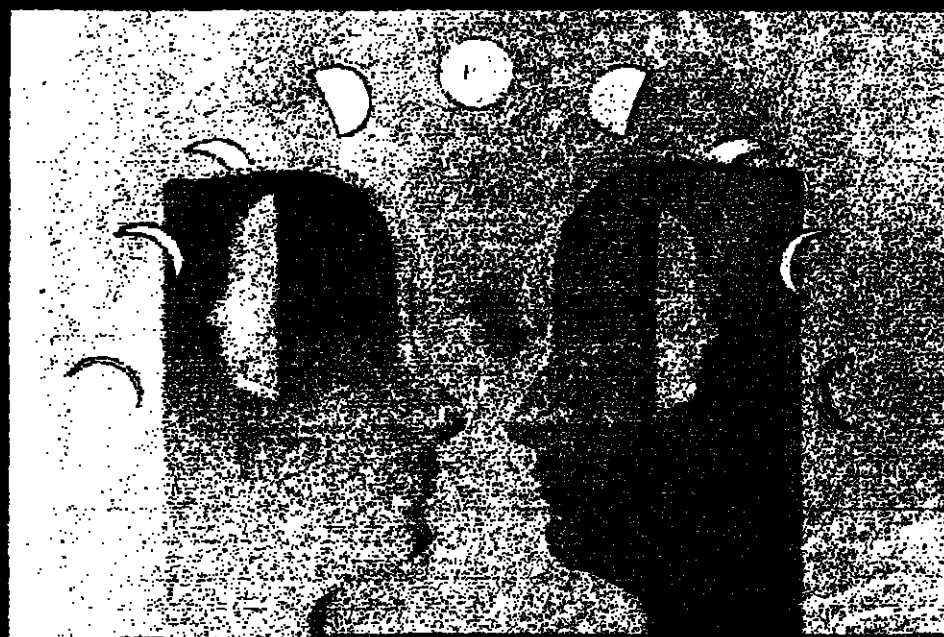
As things stand, he is confident he can handle Ramon, and he had written Zivli off long ago.

Ramon has been upset with the primary system Labor adopted at Barak's prodding. He has no doubt that Barak is scheming to push him down the slate of Knesset candidates.

Ramon's threat to boycott the primaries is supposed to ring a loud warning bell for Barak, but within a few days, he could well be found to silence that bell.

See ANALYSIS, Page 2

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Orthodox boycott Haifa Religious Council session

By HAIM SHAPIRO and NINA GILBERT

The Haifa Religious Council failed to meet last night, despite a High Court order to do so, because none of the members, except for the chairman and the new Reform and Conservative representatives, showed up.

Anat Freund, who is identified with the Reform movement, said that she and Conservative council member Yonatan Friedland arrived in advance. At 6 p.m. sharp, she said, council chairman Yitzhak Getz appeared and announced that he was present and then retired to a side room.

At 7 p.m., Freund said, Getz appeared again and said that as a quorum was not present, the meeting was cancelled. At no time, she said, did Getz actually speak to either herself or Friedland.

According to the rules of the religious councils, if a quorum is not present, the council is to meet again in a week and conduct business with as many members as are on hand.

"That is what I expected," Freund said, referring to the boycott by the Orthodox council members. "I'm sorry that is the

way it is. Judaism should unite people, but those who talk about defending Judaism act in this way. But it won't stop me doing what I think is right."

Freund said that in theory, next week's meeting should have more members attending, since the business to be conducted includes the election of the chairman, deputy chairman, and treasurer. However, she added, in the light of a recent move by Interior Minister Eli Shalev, she simply did not know what would happen.

Shalev has formulated a plan to drastically cut the number of religious council members. The Haifa council, which now has 32 members, would have nine, while smaller cities would have seven, and local councils would have five. This would, in turn, cut the number of council members nominated by political parties and probably eliminate the Reform and Conservative nominees, who were all named by Meretz.

Reacting to the boycott, which included council members representing the Labor Party and the Likud, Rabbi Mordechai Rotem, chairman of the

Israel Union for Progressive Judaism, said that those who had stayed away in the name of avoiding controversy had actually exacerbated controversy. The official rabbinate, he said, was inciting the religious public, which is moving toward ever greater extremism.

Rotem noted that only last week the chief rabbis had attended the meeting of the Agudat Yisrael Council of Sages. This week, he said, the Haifa chief rabbis, who in the past had been characterized as moderates, had attended a haredi protest meeting vilifying the Reform.

"We haven't yet forgotten the incitement against the late Yitzhak Rabin," Rotem said.

MK Dedi Zucker (Meretz) said the failure of the council to meet is the result of the actions of a "group of people who are law-breakers."

MK Roman Bronfman, Yisrael Ba'aliya's faction whip, said he hoped the council would still meet.

"Haifa has always had high marks for tolerance, and the head of the council showed this by calling the meeting. Once again, it has shown that it is a small

island in a sea of instability," he said.

At the same time, he hoped the bill to keep Reform and Conservative representatives off the councils would fail tomorrow. He termed as "very grave" the threat by Finance Committee chairman Avraham Ravitz (United Torah Judaism) that his faction would not support the budget and economic arrangements bill unless the measure is passed.

MK Michael Kleiner (Geshet) hoped the Knesset would decide to approve the government bill to keep Reform and Conservative representatives from the councils.

The Law Committee has voted against advancing the bill. Committee chairman MK Hanan Porat (National Religious Party) will therefore bring the committee's recommendation before the

Knesset for a vote. Zucker said he believes there is a good chance the Knesset will accept the committee's recommendation, which makes it more difficult to enlist a majority.

If the Knesset overrides the decision, the bill can be put to a vote in two versions, one which would enable a representative to stay even if he does not agree to pledge loyalty to the Chief Rabbi.

State appeals decision to recognize 23 converts

The State Attorney's Office yesterday appealed a Jerusalem District Court decision recognizing the non-Orthodox conversion of 23 people in Israel and abroad and allowing them to be registered as Jews in the population registry.

In its appeal to the Supreme Court, the office claims the district court erred in its interpretation of the law and a recent High Court ruling. It acknowledged that the High Court did indeed maintain it is sufficient for the Jewish community abroad to establish the conversion as valid, in order for the convert to be listed as a Jew in the population registry.

However, the office claims that such cases should not be

generalized to include a person who traveled abroad in order to undergo conversion. These include those who study for conversion in Israel and then go abroad for a short stay to complete the process in a final ceremony.

While the State Attorney's Office said it accepts the High Court's ruling that the type of conversion abroad is not relevant, it argued that it is necessary for the convert to have belonged to the community and not simply to have passed through it.

The appeal also requests that only conversions performed in Israel under the supervision of the Chief Rabbi be recognized. (Jm)

Man kills himself at shooting range

By HEIDI J. GLEIT

A 33-year-old man shot himself in the head at a Ramat Gan shooting range yesterday afternoon. He died a few hours later.

It appears to have been an accident and not suicide, the Tel Aviv police said after an initial investi-

gation. A shooting instructor at the range told police that he gave the man a gun and told him to wait a moment and he would give him directions. The instructor then turned to speak to another man and a few seconds later, the man shot himself.

Our beloved mother and sister

IRIS NANCY CHAIKIN

passed away on January 18, 1999.

The funeral will take place at Beit HaShespe, Har Hamenuhot, at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, January 19, 1999.

Deeply mourned by her:

Son and daughter-in-law,
Donald Chaikin and Fiona Gell
Daughter, Rhonda Chaikin
Sister, Selma Dreiseszun
Sister-in-law, Pearl Walker

Condolence calls at 5 Mendele, Apt. 10, Jerusalem.
Tuesday, Jan. 19, until 8 p.m.; Wednesday, Jan. 20, 1 p.m.-8 p.m.



The Hadassah College of Technology

deeply mourns the passing of

DR. MIRIAM FREUND-ROSENTHAL

a great educator, friend and supporter of our institution since its inception, an outstanding leader of Hadassah and a true Zionist.

We extend our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family in the USA and in Israel.

Dr. Yaacov Amidi, Faculty, Staff and Students



Id al-Fitr

Moslem worshippers make their way through Jerusalem's Old City yesterday to al-Aksa Mosque for prayers marking Id al-Fitr, the festival ending Ramadan. Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai released some 30 Palestinian prisoners in honor of the holiday, said Shlomo Dror, spokesman for the coordinator of activities in the territories. He said none of those freed had committed crimes of violence or serious security offenses against Israelis, adding that some had been released Sunday night and the rest would be freed today. The Palestinian Authority also released 38 prisoners for the holiday. (Guy Gordon)

RAMON

Continued from Page 1

However, at the convention Ramon walked into the main auditorium to tremendous applause. Then, after his speech on Thursday, he told journalists he would be remaining in Labor.

MK Eli Ben-Menahem hinted that Sunday night's decision on the vote procedure for the Knesset list could still be reversed, given that only some 80 central committee members attended out of a possible 1,800. "The decision was taken against Barak's will," he said.

Alternatively, members of the party could appeal against the new system and arrange a special central committee meeting to discuss Ramon. But Ramon has said he is not prepared to receive a reserved slot, as he wishes to be voted onto the list by party members.

Shavah Weiss, whose proposal it was, said the system is fair and he believes Ramon could well be elected No. 1. "You think he won't be elected? He'll be elected in a superlative manner," he said.

Even if Ramon does not stand for election as an MK, Barak could decide to appoint him as a minister if he forms a government. This was one of a number of options discussed during a meeting early yesterday among Barak, Ramon, and MK Yossi Beilin.

Party reaction to Zvilli's announcement, meanwhile, was far more muted. One spokeswoman said, "It's not worth our while even bothering to comment."

In his resignation letter Zvilli said Barak rules Labor "without patience and without tolerance, with unnecessary and damaging forcefulness." But, Shavah, he wrote, "is gifted with leadership qualities and with the global perspective of a leader that the people of Israel are crying out for."

To Jean, Alan, Colin, Elaine, Stanley and their families

Please accept our deepest condolences on the death of

SAM LEVIN 5"3

The Wertheimer family
The Schneider family

With deep sorrow we mourn the passing of our husband, brother, father and grandfather

SAM LEVIN 5"3

His Wife: Jean Levin
His Sister: Hilda Chatkin and her family
His Children: Alan, Colin, Elaine, Stanley and their families

ORR

Continued from Page 1

The police remand request said Ohana had acted in cold blood to harm the integrity of public officials, "all this with the goal of bringing about a retrial through a frightening display of fabrication, lies, and false charges."

Caspi criticized the wording of the remand extension request, saying, "The facts are presented with a certain drama... [I] have just related to the facts themselves."

Supreme Court President Aharon Barak, at a Bar Association meeting, refused to comment on the affair and said the justices are "limited in our ability to respond. For example, we will have to discuss questions of a retrial and so on, and we cannot - heaven forbid - take a stand either way or that."

The head of the National Fraud Squad, Cmdr. Miri Golan, described it as "one of the most serious cases of fraud the country has ever witnessed."

A box of documents presented to the court contains statements, letters, and memos allegedly from former state attorneys Yona Blattman and Dorit Beinisch, now a Supreme Court justice, police commanders, and Bar Association

head Dror Hoter-Ishai, who was Ohana's defense lawyer during the original trial.

Caspi accepted the police view that Ohana could interfere with the evidence, try to influence witnesses, or even disappear if he was not detained.

Caspi rejected a defense request to reduce Ohana's remand for health reasons and because he has already served a prison sentence. "This type of trade-off - detention for detention - as the defense attorney suggested is not pertinent," he said.

Live noted that Ohana's complaints against the police have been lodged with the Justice Ministry department responsible for investigating the police for two years.

"We all want to reach the truth," he said. "Instead of praising Ohana for wanting to get a retrial, we find ourselves in the reverse situation, which is incomprehensible. The police investigations division has all the material, and to come today and say that Mr. Ohana will influence witnesses in an investigation which has been going on two years, is more than malicious."

Eran Shindar, head of the division, told reporters that the material he had seen was also forged.

Itim contributed to this report.

HUSSEIN

Continued from Page 1

After an official welcoming ceremony by everyone from ministers and ambassadors to tribal leaders, he is due to proceed by motorcade through the city, which has been decked out with thousands of banners from companies, individuals, and government agencies.

"Our happiness is made complete by your coming back," read a typical banner.

In addition to being an expression of joy at the king's recovery, the festivities appear aimed at helping to reestablish Hussein's role as the active monarch of old, while mobilizing support for the palace in a country beset by 17 percent unemployment and a moribund economy.

Hussein's absence, and pictures taken in October showing him hairless and looking frail, left Jordanians grappling with the possibility that his demise was imminent and the reins of power were about to be handed over to his brother, Crown Prince Hassan.

Regarding the king's return, Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh said last night: "Everyone is waiting for this moment, and it will definitely raise the whole mood of

the people."

The main issues facing Hussein will be the economy and the peace process, Tarawneh said. "We have to pick up a long, long agenda, both internally and externally. We've been briefing the king daily, but now we need to go into details on the issues related to the economic situation. I am sure his majesty will grab the moment again and do his best in proceeding with the peace process."

There are some political developments in Israel that postponed Wye, which is totally unjustified," Tarawneh added. "We don't believe the peace process should be trapped for any political development within one of the parties. We should be totally implemented."

Kalanzi, the heating company owner, summed up the population's affection for the king, saying: "He is good for us; he is a regular person; he does not remove himself from the people."

man behind him. Zvilli later claimed that party employees, whom Barak summarily sacked, revealed to him that Barak instructed them to falsify the results of the vote in which the Peres-for-president proposal was defeated.

By the time Shahak neared the political arena, Zvilli could afford to suggest that the entire Left choose between Barak and Shahak in a multi-party primary. He never expected Barak to consider his recommendation, and Barak didn't.

The big danger for Zvilli is that Shahak might lose his nerve. Among Laborites and centrists alike, it is thought Shahak may pack it in and team up with Barak out of desperation. Ironically, it could yet be that the Shahak bandwagon will lead Zvilli right back to Barak's camp - if not in the first round, then in the second.

ANALYSIS

Continued from Page 1

Unlike Zvilli, Ramon has little incentive to defect to Amnon Lipkin-Shahak's stymied center party. His bridges in Labor are not burned, and he can be minister in a possible future Labor government, even if he doesn't run for the Knesset.

It was a foregone conclusion that Zvilli and Merom could not coexist with Barak. They would have quit Labor even if Shahak had not come along to offer a respectable way out. Instead of heading to the center, they could just as easily have joined Meretz. They might even have pressured their patron Shimon Peres to run on his own, and float a political life raft they could clamber aboard.

In sharp contrast to Ramon, the only option which did not exist for them was staying put. The personal animosity between them and Barak could not be glossed over. The trouble with Zvilli and Merom was that in Barak's eyes they were Peres by proxy, or even, as a top Barak aide put it, "more Peres than Peres is."

The paradox is that Peres, of all rivals, has lately been playing the role of Barak's loyal backer. Not that he loses a chance to upstage Barak, as when Peres brought the who's who of the world's has-beens to his peace center, just when Barak was kicking off his campaign at the party convention.

Zvilli, somehow, ended up taking the punches aimed at Peres. He became Peres' fall guy, and the writing was on the wall for him as soon as Barak replaced Peres as

party chairman. Zvilli immediately resigned as party secretary-general. Thereafter, he was kept out of crucial consultations, and the biggest job he got was organizing the memorial for Yitzhak Rabin.

Zvilli and Barak quarreled bitterly after the February 1996 spate of suicide bombings, when Zvilli claimed Barak was plotting to wrest the Defense portfolio from Peres, thereby implying his culpability. Zvilli then succeeded in foiling Barak's appointment as Labor's information director in the election campaign, only to see him appointed manager of Peres's personal campaign.

Zvilli crossed his Rubicon after the elections, when he spearheaded the drive to name Peres party president. This was a direct challenge to Barak, who didn't mind stroking Peres' ego, but could not abide the

Meridor visits Beit El, calls for territorial compromise

By MARGOT DUDKEVITCH

MK Alex Lubotzky (Third Way) announced his support for Dan Meridor in the coming elections, saying he is the only candidate capable of bringing about national reconciliation.

"I am thinking ahead to the day after the elections. If [Binyamin] Netanyahu is reelected, half the people will be depressed and, as Leah Rabin was quoted as saying, 'It will be time to pack the bags.' If [Ehud] Barak is elected, the other half will be depressed. However, if Meridor is elected, the majority will be satisfied even if some didn't vote for him."

Lubotzky said he is still undecided whether to move over to the center party and is waiting to hear what its guidelines and platform will be.

He spoke shortly after a press conference given by Meridor during a visit to Beit El, where Meridor met with Uri Ariel of Tekuma and leaders of the Council of Jewish Communities in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza. Ariel confirmed reports that negotiations to unify Tekuma and Ze'ev (Benny) Begin's Herut are under way, but said nothing has been finalized.

The council has been pressing members of Tekuma, Herut, Moledet, and Tsomet to unite to prevent splitting national camp votes.

Welcoming Meridor to Beit El, Ariel spoke about the settlement's plans to expand to a population of 15,000. Recently, it was linked to Mekorot and the Israel Electric Corp., and given the go-ahead to build a road linking it to Ofra and the bypass road, instead of forcing residents to travel through El-Bira and Ramallah. Work should start in a matter of months, he said.

Meridor, no stranger to Beit El



Uri Ariel (right), of the new right-wing Tekuma party, shows Dan Meridor around Beit El yesterday.

(Sharmenko/Harari)

and the settler leaders, stressed the need for a change in leadership.

"While the present leadership is vocally strong, it does nothing. What we need is a strong leader, who will act and not just talk. One thing I can guarantee is that if we win the election, people

will know that what we say, we will do, and what we promise, we will carry out."

He said that the coming struggle will be for borders and security, but this should not be construed as returning to the 1967 borders. There will be a need for conciliation, even if it means giving

up land, he said. However, the center of the struggle will be the Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria, such as Ofra, and the capability to defend and safeguard them.

Council chairman Pinhas Wallerstein told Meridor he cannot differentiate between Labor

and the center party. "You are the only person who is willing to relate to the reality faced by Jews today, but nobody in your party has yet managed to relate directly to the situation."

Meridor then visited Ofra, where he met with girls at the ulpana.

MK Stern considers creating new party

By DAVID ZEVI HARRIS

MK Yosi Stern (Yisrael Ba'Aliya) has not ruled out the possibility of establishing a new immigrants' party, if his present party does not change its direction.

Speaking to *The Jerusalem Post* yesterday, Stern said he does not believe party leader Nathan Sharansky is capable of revitalizing Yisrael Ba'Aliya and pushing it closer to its original aims.

"I've honestly got no personal ambition to be No. 1," said Stern, who added he would be happy to serve another party leader, so long as a new impetus could be found.

Stern also said he would consider joining Avigdor Lieberman's Yisrael Beiteinu list.

Sharansky told reporters that as far as he is concerned, Stern should lay his cards on the table, admit he is already actively working for Lieberman, and leave Yisrael Ba'Aliya.

"Yosi Stern's problem is not the lack of democracy, but that for some time he's been working for another party, participat-

ing in its conferences and establishing its branches, while like a Trojan horse, he remains in our party," he said.

To this, Stern replied that Sharansky is losing party support at the grass-roots level. At least a third of the central committee members support the views of Stern and his colleague Michael Nudelman, he claimed.

Stern's dissatisfaction with Sharansky's leadership dates back to 1996. He maintains that since then, the party has only achieved its aims in "a most modest way." Stern believes the party has failed in the spheres of public housing and rental accommodation, employment and professional training, and taking advantage of the new immigrants in establishing a special relationship with the former Soviet states.

The party has also failed to establish focused, efficient internal machinery, according to Stern.

"This is all a result of the type of leadership and the style of leadership," he said. "It's not that I'm against Sharansky. I think he's an outstanding fellow, with his



Yosi Stern (David Rubinger)

name carved in Jewish history, but the direction he's taking is destroying the party."

Sharansky is attempting to sell the party to veteran Israelis, but Stern is of the opinion that the only way to attract non-immigrant voters is by pushing forward with the party's original platform, which he said is attractive to many voters.

Stern and Nudelman only decided to vent their frustrations publicly when it became clear that the party did not have a further 18 months to find its feet, but had to prepare for the May elections.

Sharansky told reporters during a tour of the South that he thinks the party's achievements for immigrants speak for themselves. Unlike other parties, in the run up to the election, Yisrael Ba'Aliya is not reserving slots on its list for specific candidates, said Sharansky, pointing to what he sees as the party's democratic nature.

Sharansky is scheduled to hold a news conference this morning at which he expected to renew his attack on Stern and Nudelman.

Tomorrow evening, the party's central committee will establish the framework for the party's list.

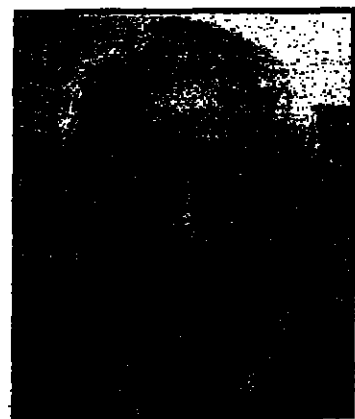
Shaul Amor urged to turn down portfolio

By LIAT COLLINS and NINA GILBERT

MK Raa Cohen (Meretz) called on Shaul Amor yesterday to reject the job of minister without portfolio, saying that Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu only intends "to use him."

After 11 years as a Likud MK and several nominations for senior positions, Amor is expected this week to be appointed minister in the Prime Minister's Office, in charge of socio-economic affairs. The appointment will be in force until after the elections.

Cohen said it was not possible to take any meaningful steps on social issues during a four-month election period. "Everything will be a show and a sham."



Shaul Amor (Itzhak Harari)

Netanyahu only wants "a good-hearted person to cover his fail-

ures: expanding unemployment and sending tens of thousands of children and their parents into poverty," he said.

Amor, who has headed the Knesset Social Caucus and was until recently mayor of Migdal Ha'emek, said the fact that the premier is also acting finance minister should help get things done in the relatively short time he has.

When asked in a radio interview if he would accept Netanyahu's offer, given the short time to elections, he said: "I seriously considered whether to take the offer."

Amor was born in Morocco in 1943 and immigrated at age 13 as an orphan.

The appointment ends a string of

disappointments for Amor, and his wife Susanne. In this Knesset he thought he would be a minister and when this did not happen he unsuccessfully ran for the position of Knesset speaker and later for president. His wife was defeated in the recent municipal elections when she tried to succeed him as mayor after he chose to remain in the Knesset following the ban on holding outside jobs.

His ministerial appointment will reportedly cost some NIS 50,000 a month.

Cohen, the author of the Public Housing Law, said that he "knows for a fact that Meir Sheetrit and Netanyahu want Shaul Amor as a fig leaf for their embarrassing opposition to the Public Housing Law."

ON THE RECORD

[Amnon Lipkin-Shahak] is gifted with leadership qualities and with the perspective of a leader that the people of Israel are crying out for. I'm leaving my political home with great sorrow and pain, but I'm unable to go against my conscience and my faith - Nissim Zivili, on announcing his departure from Labor for Shahak's center party.

It's not that I'm against [Natan] Sharansky. I think he's an outstanding fellow, with his name carved in Jewish history, but the direction he's taking is destroying the party - Yisrael Ba'Aliya MK Yosi Stern.

Yosi Stern's problem is not the lack of democracy, but that for some time he's been working for another party, participating in its conferences and establishing its branches, while like a Trojan horse, he remains in our party - Sharansky responding to Stern.

I am thinking ahead, the day after the elections. If [Binyamin] Netanyahu is elected, half the people will be depressed and, as Leah Rabin was quoted as saying, 'It will be time to pack the bags.' - Third Way MK Alex Lubotzky explaining why he decided to support Dan Meridor.

You are the only person who is willing to relate to the reality faced by Jews today, but nobody in your party has yet managed to relate directly to the situation - Pinhas Wallerstein, chairman of the Council of Jewish Settlements in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza, to Meridor.

I seriously considered whether to take the offer - MK Shaul Amor when asked if he would accept Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's offer to join the cabinet.

ELECTIONS

notebook

Porat to remain in NRP

NRP MK Hanan Porat announced yesterday he will stay in the party. In the last few weeks he held talks with both Ze'ev (Benny) Begin's Herut and Tekuma about the possibility of joining either party.

Porat's decision was welcomed by NRP leader Yitzhak Levy, who is to remain in charge of his party after the deadline passed at 1 p.m. yesterday for any potential challengers to declare their candidacy and none came forward. Levy's position is expected to be ratified next week by party members, who at the same time will vote on the NRP's election platform.

Women MKs: Safe slots will limit us

Members of the Knesset Committee on the Status of Women yesterday called for party delegates to support women to ensure that their representation is greater than the few "safe slots" reserved for them in parties.

Labor MK Yael Dayan said her party's plan to reserve slots for women would result in delegates not voting for women in the primary, and thus their reaching very low slots on the list.

Under the Labor Party plan, one slot is reserved for a woman in the top 10, and two in every succeeding group of 10 slots.

Dayan called on women's organizations and Na'amat to lobby delegates to choose 50 percent of women candidates. MK Naomi Chazan (Meretz) called on party leaders to campaign to advance women, despite the reserved slots, while MK Anat Maor (Meretz) said the aim is for 15 women MKs in the 15th Knesset.

Committee chairwoman Marina Solodkin (Yisrael Ba'Aliya) called for a 60 percent increase in the number of women in the next Knesset, in line with the growth in their representation on municipal councils in the November elections.

Two women who are heading parties competing in the next elections are Pinna Rosenblum, heading a party under her name, and Nehama Ronen, former Environment Ministry director-general, who is heading the Voice of the Environment Party.

Poraz to establish third center party

Shinui's sole MK Avraham Poraz announced yesterday his party has ended its relationship with Meretz and will be running separately. In a joint letter to Knesset House Committee chairman Raphael Pinhasi (Shas), Poraz and Meretz whip Haim Oron said the parties had decided to part ways.

Later in the day, the two told reporters the decision was reached amicably.

"My decision is to run independently for the elections," said Poraz, who describes himself as a representative of the middle classes. "I'll stand for those who participate in the free market and believe in privatization." Unlike other centrist parties, Poraz said his will be economically liberal but politically dovish.

Barak invites Meimad to join Labor

Labor Party chairman Ehud Barak yesterday invited Meimad, the moderate religious movement, to join his One Israel list, a senior aide said yesterday.

During a meeting in Jerusalem, also attended by MKs Yossi Beilin and Haim Ramon, Barak explained to Meimad leaders the importance of a wide consensus in any future government, which allows for wide rapprochement and integration.

Barak's 10-point manifesto includes a commitment to "respecting Israeli tradition and the fostering of Israeli tradition," said his aide.

Meimad officials have made no secret of their closeness to Dan Meridor and have indicated they would support his bid for the premiership. Yesterday Third Way MK Alex Lubotzky, widely associated with Meimad, made public his support for Meridor.

Despite this, Barak aides say they are keen to attract the likes of Meimad, which is insisting on two or three safe seats on the One Israel list and would also like to be guaranteed the education portfolio in return for supporting Barak.

A clean campaign

Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein yesterday reiterated his stance that aggressive campaign messages including violence, whether physical or verbal, will not be tolerated. He was speaking at a meeting of senior police officers. State Attorney Edna Arbel, and Tamar Edri, head of the Central Elections Committee.

He also said that any instance of election fraud must be dealt with swiftly, and that a joint forum of the State Attorney's Office and the police would meet periodically to discuss election issues.

Police Insp.-Gen. Yehuda Wilk said he would make every effort to prevent outside forces from involving the police in attempts to advance their interests during the campaign.

David Zev Harris, Nina Gilbert, and Him

THE BRITISH COUNCIL PRESENTS

An Evening with שול פיליפס

STAN PHILLIPS

LIVIA FROM "CLAUDIA"

"A ZAZZLE!"

The volume of the... not appearing... "A ZAZZLE!"

AWARD-WINNING STAR OF STAGE AND SCREEN, STAN PHILLIPS, HAS BECOME A CLAUDIA PARTLY THROUGH IONCI FROM MUSICALS HE HAS APPEARED IN AND PARTLY THROUGH SONGS THAT ARE CLOSE TO HIS HEART.

HE TALKS ABOUT SOME OF HER FAVORITE SONGS, INCLUDING THE EVER POPULAR "I CLAUDIA". THERE WILL BE SONGS FROM KURT WEILL, RODGERS AND HART, JOHNNY MERKEL AND COLE PORTER TOGETHER WITH SONGS FROM HER HIGHLY-SUCCESSFUL AND LONG-RUNNING SHOW ABOUT THE LEGENDARY DIVA - MARLENE DIETRICH, ABOUT TO BE SEEN ON BROADWAY.

AN ORIGINAL AND SOMETIMES NARRIOUS ACCOUNT OF A CAREER WHICH BEGAN AS A CHILD IN WALES AND HAS TAKEN STAN PHILLIPS ALL OVER THE WORLD.

DEvised AND DIRECTED BY THIERRY HARCOURT

MUSICAL DIRECTOR: KEVIN AMOI

WORLD PREMIERE

REVENUE: WIN AUDITION

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NEWS

in brief

Incitement committee reports

The Israeli-Palestinian incitement committee, including US members, released its first report yesterday after completing a series of meetings to reach a satisfactory working definition of the term incitement.

Israel wanted to focus only on statements which directly incited to violence, while the Palestinians wanted all political expressions which could lead to violence to be considered incitement.

The teams each presented examples of what they saw as incitement by the other side. Several steps to combat incitement were decided on by the committee members, such as inviting senior newspaper editors to a discussion on the role of the media in the fight against incitement.

Danna Harman

Shahar, Ben-Arye win Israel Prize

Prof. Arye Shahar and Yehoshua Ben-Arye have won this year's Israel Prize in geographical research, Education Minister Yitzhak Levy announced yesterday.

Shahar is noted for his work on urban geography and town planning. He founded the Department of Town Planning at the Hebrew University in the 1970s. He was also one of the editors of the new urban atlases. He headed planning teams for the Tel Aviv metropolitan area and the nationwide integrated system. He headed a research project into European urban areas.

Ben-Arye founded the discipline of historical geography in Israel and wrote groundbreaking books on the War of Independence, Jewish settlement, and Jerusalem in modern times.

Ilan



Yehoshua Ben-Arye



Arye Shahar (Efraim Kibshak)

Eilat to use Uvda airport next winter

The Airports Authority announced yesterday that it intends to utilize the Uvda air field for charter flights to and from Eilat during the 1999-2000 winter season. It said that it made the decision because the Israeli terminal for the joint Eilat-Akaba airport is only to be ready in December and that many of those in the tourism industry had asked not to split the season between two terminals.

Haim Shapiro

Kuwait editor defends journalist who was here

A Kuwaiti editor defended one of his journalists who was detained for making a controversial visit to Israel. *al-Sayassah* newspaper reported yesterday.

"If [reporter Hamid] Buyabis had not gone to Israel, I would have gone instead," *al-Sayassah* editor Ahmed al-Jarallah was quoted as telling the State Security Prosecution.

Kuwait's elected parliament, the *Jumhuriyya* Association and other groups in the country have strongly condemned Buyabis' recent visit to Israel, with which Kuwait is technically still at war. Buyabis was released last week on \$3,500 bail after state security questioned him for three days.

Reuters

David Belin, outreach activist, dies at 70

David W. Belin, an Iowa lawyer who in 1987 established the Jewish Outreach Institute to embrace interfaith families, died Sunday in Minnesota of injuries sustained in a fall. He was 70.

Within the American Reform movement, Belin, who once served as chairman of its outreach commission, aggressively agitated for a resolution that would have called on Reform rabbis to officiate at interfaith marriages. Although some Reform rabbis conduct such ceremonies, Belin was stymied at the 1997 convention of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, which saw his efforts as intruding on the rabbinate.

Marilyn Henry

Panel to investigate 1992's El Al Dutch crash

Public hearings into the crash of an El Al cargo plane into a densely-populated Amsterdam suburb in 1992 are to start on January 27, a Dutch parliamentary committee set up to look into the accident said yesterday. Dutch newspapers have said the plane, which ploughed through a tower block in Bijlmer, was carrying ingredients used in making sarin nerve gas.

Israel later confirmed the plane was carrying a chemical DMMP, used to make sarin, but insisted it was non-toxic and was to have been used to test filters that protect against chemical weapons.

Reuters

Norway to drop charges in botched Mossad hit

OSLO (AP) - Former Mossad agent Michael Harari, suspected of leading an Israeli hit team that killed the wrong man in 1973, will not face trial in Norway due to lack of evidence, the Oslo state's attorney said yesterday.

On July 21, 1973, Moroccan waiter Ahmed Bouchikhi was shot and killed in Lillehammer by a Mossad team that mistook him for the PLO's Hassan Salameh, mastermind of the killing of 11 Israeli athletes at the 1972 Munich Olympics.

Five Mossad agents served brief prison terms for the murder before they were pardoned. Norway had suspected Harari, 72, of planning the hit and last June issued an arrest warrant before the statute of limitations expired.

PM orders meetings with US over stolen Pollard documents

Clinton to review case today

By BATSHEVA TSUR

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has instructed his staff to begin high-level meetings with the US intelligence community over accusations that Israel did not return all classified documents passed on by Jonathan Pollard. It is hoped the meetings will facilitate the release of the convicted spy, Pollard's lawyer, Larry Dub, said after meeting with Netanyahu yesterday.

President Bill Clinton is today to review the possibility of releasing Pollard.

The prime minister's legal adviser, Shimon Stern, and other senior officials were instructed to discuss with the US administration claims that Israel did not return all of the highly secret material which Pollard passed to it, including a key surveillance manual containing encryption codes, Dub said. According to an article in *The New Yorker*, the manual was described as so secret that it had never been mentioned in public.

Netanyahu plans to take action to combat what he sees as a disinformation campaign being waged in Washington, Dub said. He said that the charges in *The New Yorker* article, that the documents were sold to the highest bidder, were a slur not only against Pollard but against the Israeli authorities.

Dub said he had appealed directly to Clinton, and had also written twice to White House Counsel Charles Ruff. He said he had also twice requested meetings with Craig Iscoe of the Justice Department and was surprised that there were charges that he had not presented Pollard's view to the US



Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu meets yesterday with Jonathan Pollard's lawyer, Larry Dub. (Reuters)

Justice Department in anticipation of the review of the release request.

At his meeting with Dub, Netanyahu reiterated his dissatisfaction with Labor Party leader Ehud Barak for failing to sign a joint letter to Clinton on Pollard's release.

According to sources close to Netanyahu, Barak was afraid that, should Pollard be released as a result of the joint plea, Netanyahu would back in the pre-election glory.

"Pollard was sent by the State of Israel," Netanyahu said. "This is not a political issue. Israel has to be

responsible for bringing him home. We do not leave our wounded soldiers in the field."

He said it was essential that Barak sign the letter on the day that Clinton is reviewing the question of Pollard's release.

Barak responded on Israel Radio that the public declarations about Pollard had merely "buried him deeper." Barak said he believes in quiet diplomacy. When he met Clinton during his recent visit to Israel, Barak said, he had discussed Pollard with him.

"Most events don't take place on television, but rather through hard work on real issues with real people," Barak said without relating directly to the question of his signature.

MK Yossi Beilin (Labor), who criticized Netanyahu's attacks on Barak over the letter, said that "the media circus around Pollard is part of those publicized events that merely delay Pollard's release."

Rabbi Alexander Schindler, a former chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, said he is "bitterly disappointed"

that Barak refused to sign a bipartisan plea to Clinton to commute Pollard's sentence.

"Are there no issues of national interest which transcend Israel's stormy partisan politics?" Schindler wrote in a statement received by *The Jerusalem Post*. "Should Pollard be allowed to languish in jail even a day longer for fear that a political opponent might gain an edge?"

Barak's failure to support the Yuli Edelstein initiative does scant honor to the memory of Yitzhak Rabin, who never hesitated to assert that Pollard's continued imprisonment has long since crossed the line where justice ends and vindictiveness begins.

Schindler was not available yesterday for comment.

Alon Pinkas, Barak's adviser on foreign affairs, said in a statement that Schindler "means very well and evidently wants only the best for Mr. Pollard." However, he added, "that is why he should be extra careful and thoroughly familiar with the facts and the complexities before releasing such a blunt and uncalled for statement, especially pertaining to elections in Israel."

Nina Gilbert adds:

MK Ophir Pines (Labor) said that he is considering resigning as head of the Knesset caucus for Pollard because of Netanyahu's "cynical use of Pollard's suffering to advance his election campaign." Pines condemned "the scathing attack" by Netanyahu against Barak, and said the move would harm the efforts of the caucus to press for Pollard's release.

Marilyn Henry contributed to this report.

Gov't visits to Pollard put on hold

By HILIEL KUTTLER

WASHINGTON - Visits by Israeli government officials to imprisoned spy Jonathan Pollard have been put on hold while the campaign proceeds to attain his release, Israeli Embassy officials said at the beginning of the week.

The officials did not say that the decision is an explicit one decided on by either Pollard or the Israeli government, but only that, in the words of one, "now all the effort is being put in to bring about his release - that is what he wants and rightly so - and everything else is less important."

The slowdown comes as President Bill Clinton decides on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's request to free Pollard, an issue discussed during the Wye negotiations. Leading American foreign policy, intelligence, defense, and judicial officials last week transferred to Clinton their recommendations on the matter.

The embassy's public affairs officer, Avi Granot, the govern-

ment's new liaison to Pollard, has made only one visit to Pollard in his six months on the job. Last autumn, Pollard cancelled, at the last minute, a visit by Industry and Trade Minister Natan Sharansky and his wife Avital.

An embassy official had no explanation for the change in procedure, and said that Pollard has not instructed Granot to cease visiting.

Ambassador Zalman Shoval said yesterday he has no direct contact with Pollard, and another embassy official said that Shoval speaks on occasion with Pollard's wife Esther.

In the past two weeks, a bevy of op-ed articles have appeared in leading American publications, the majority of them arguing for Pollard's continued incarceration for passing secrets to Israel in the early 1980s. Shoval said he supposed that the articles have been appearing because "there are people who are afraid that the [president's] review can lead to his release," whereas that possibility was given little chance of happening before.

Schools shut down over unpaid workers' salaries

Jerusalem Post Staff and news agencies

Municipal workers shut down schools in five towns yesterday to protest months of unpaid salaries, keeping thousands of schoolchildren home.

In Or Yehuda, school gates were welded shut to prevent classes from

being held, said municipal employee leader Shlomo Petel. Five hundred and forty municipal workers haven't been paid in three months because of a NIS 110 million town deficit.

Petel said that no local services would be provided until workers got paid.

The electric company cut power to Or Yehuda's municipal buildings for brief periods last week, and the water and telephone companies are threatening to cut service over unpaid bills, mayoral spokesman Shlomi Muallem said.

Garbage piled up for several days last week until striking sanitation workers allowed a neighboring municipality to collect it for fear of an outbreak of disease.

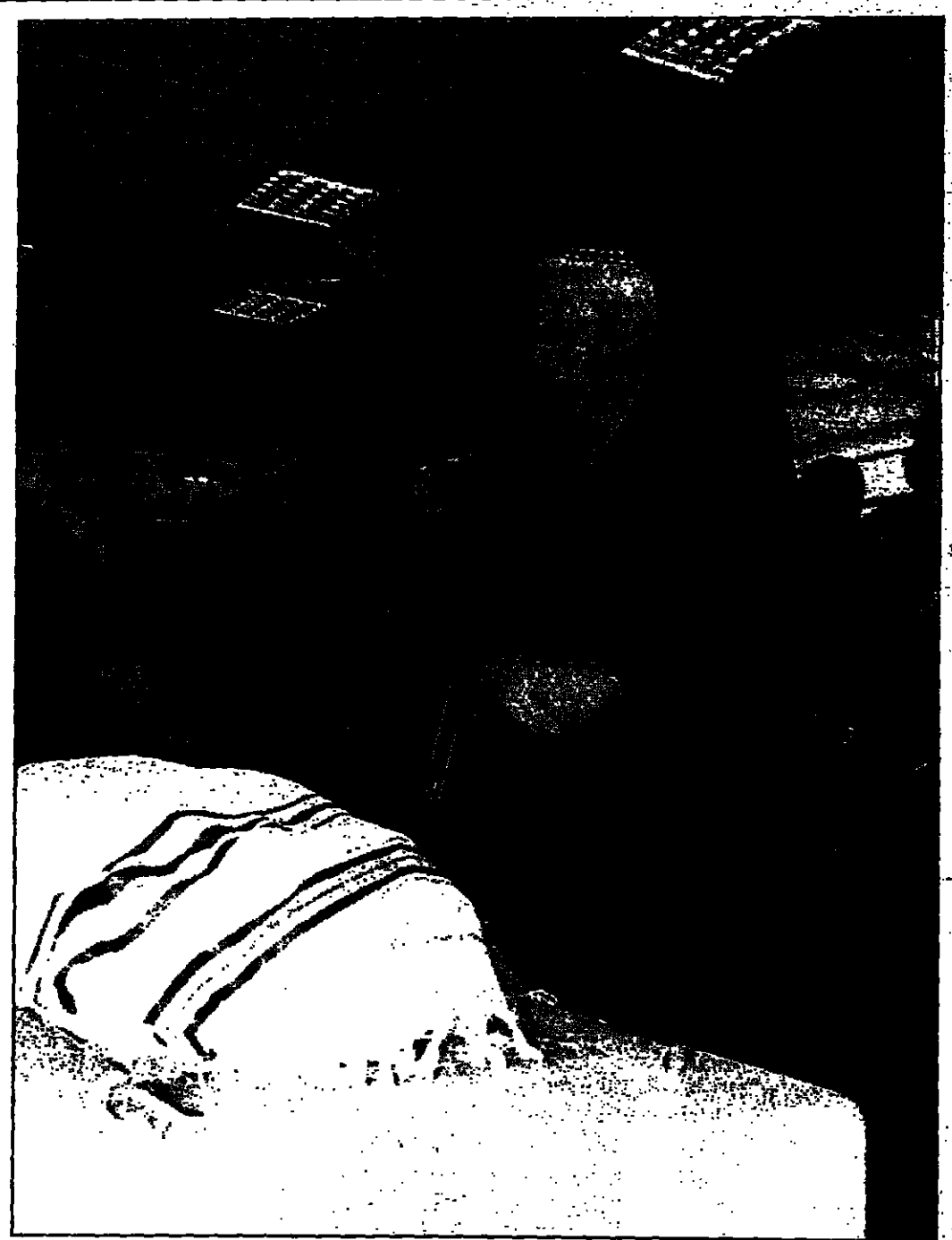
Schools and local services were also shut down yesterday in four other cash-strapped towns, where workers have held demonstrations and periodic strikes over the past two weeks to pressure Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the Interior Ministry to pay their salaries, but no compromise has been reached to bail out the ailing communities.

The mayors of those towns have blamed the debts on mismanagement by administrations voted out in last November's local elections.

Interior Minister Eli Shussman suggested yesterday that payment of municipal salaries be turned over to an external public body, instead of leaving it to local authorities. He also suggested sanctions against mayors who leave their towns in debt.

Netanyahu said yesterday that only five or six local authorities have a real budget crisis. He claimed that the strikes that have broken out in other authorities are "the tactics of negotiations."

"Not all the local authorities are crumbling," Netanyahu said.



Comrade in arms

Foreign Minister Ariel Sharon pays his respects at the funeral yesterday of Col. (res.) Shlomo Baum, a former comrade from Paratroop Unit 101, in Jerusalem. (Shavi Shemov)

Sharon upholds ties with Yugoslavia

By NINA GILBERT

Foreign Minister Ariel Sharon told the Knesset yesterday he opposes breaking diplomatic ties with Yugoslavia, despite its alleged role in the massacre of 45 ethnic Albanians in Kosovo, a province demanding independence from Yugoslavia.

"We are also in a conflict - although there is no similarity between the two conflicts," he said.

Sharon was responding to a motion by MK Avraham Poraz (Shinui) and MK Shevah Weiss (Labor), who called on Israel to freeze ties with Yugoslavia and recall Israel's ambassador from Belgrade.

The foreign minister noted that Israel is observing all international sanctions imposed on Yugoslavia and would continue to monitor events in Kosovo along with the rest of the international community.

Sharon said he summoned Yugoslavia's ambassador to the Foreign Ministry yesterday to hear Israel's protest against the Serb massacre of 45 civilians last Friday. "We expressed hope that the truth would come to light, and those guilty would be punished," Sharon added.

At the same time, he said Israel supports the territorial sovereignty of Yugoslavia and hopes a solution can be reached to ensure the autonomous rights of ethnic Albanians in Kosovo. He said he told the ambassador

that Israel will offer humanitarian aid to the victims of the conflict, such as Albanian refugees from Kosovo.

At the opening of yesterday's session, Knesset Speaker Dan Tichon said the rage against the Kosovo massacre must not be a fleeting moment. "We cannot accept the tragic fate of the Albanian people. The intensity of the protest against the denial of a people to exist must be a watershed for putting an end to the killing campaign," he said.

Weiss said that seeing pictures of the massacre brought back memories of his relatives who were killed in a similar manner during the Holocaust.

At the same time, he said, it is difficult to condemn Serbia, because the Serbians fought against the Nazis while the Croats cooperated with them and set up a Nazi regime and concentration camps.

"It's hard for me to criticize a people that has such a good record toward the Jews and humanity," said Weiss. "However, they are now on the bad side. Excuses that this occurred in battle as part of a war won't help. In battle, women and children and youths are not gathered and led to a valley of death."

Chief Rabbi Yisrael Lau called for the House to mark the tragedy. He said that the Jewish people, which suffered greatly while the world stood by during the Holocaust and did nothing, should send a loud message to the entire world not to remain silent.

Yugoslavia bans US head of Kosovo mission, Page 7

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Ministry: Ad campaign equating chocolate and milk is misleading

By JUDY SIEGEL

Vered Hagalil's decision to market its chocolate bars as the equivalent of a glass of milk, calling it "my glass of milk" aroused the ire of the Health Ministry's nutrition department yesterday.

After the campaign and the label were pointed out to her by *The Jerusalem Post*, nutrition chief Dr. Dorit Kalusky said the promotion was "completely misleading and an insult to the public."

The new chocolate bar, marketed by Vered Hagalil with the name of Shoko Kid, is comprised of milk chocolate and a "milk cream" filling. The label says on the front: "three Shoko Kids = one glass of milk," while flyers claim that three of the bars "supply the important components found in a glass of milk: calcium, iron, vitamins and proteins." The product is sold under the Vered Hagalil label to the general public, and under the "super-kosher" Vered label to haredim, with advertisements showing a boy with kippa and sidecurls and a "milk moustache" for effect.

Kalusky, who said she was grateful that the campaign was brought to her attention, said she would consult with the ministry's legal advisers about it.

"It doesn't seem to violate the law, but there should be a law against such blatant deception. Chocolate bars are full of fats and sugars, and the fact that this product has some milk does not change this or make it healthful. Eating it instead of drinking milk can cause weight problems and dental cavities in children or adults."

The ministry nutritionist said that while many parents would not be fooled by the ad, some might think that if their child made a fuss about drinking milk, they could substitute chocolate bars. "Many products boast having added vitamins and minerals, but that doesn't mean they're good for you or better than eating the real thing — fruits, vegetables and milk products."

Asked to comment, Vered Hagalil marketing director Alain Loss said that such products are sold around the world and promoted as having milk, vitamins and minerals. "We don't pretend that our product is as healthful as a glass of milk." Flyers for the Vered product are now being distributed in tens of thousands of home mailboxes of haredi and religious families not reachable through the company's TV and other media campaigns.

Generali board of trustees group:

Fund has paid out more than \$70,000

By HEIDI J. GLEIT

The Generali Fund has given checks for over \$70,000 to two of the 4,072 people who appealed to the fund since it was set up last year, its board of trustees announced at a press conference yesterday.

The fund is in the process of providing "meaningful and realistic sums" in response to 39 other appeals from beneficiaries of Holocaust victims who had taken out life insurance policies with Generali before the Holocaust and were never compensated, according to Dov Levin, a retired Supreme Court justice who heads the board.

While the fund is addressing appeals from around the world, both of the recipients are Israeli, fund director Meir Lantzman said. A Tel Aviv woman received more than \$20,000 and a man from the North received \$50,000.

Assicurazioni Generali set up the \$12 million fund in accordance with an agreement with the Knesset Finance Committee. However, Martin Stern, the grandson of a policyholder, is suing the company in the US for more than \$100m. Generali also has been threatened with a class action suit in the US.



Generali Fund board chairman Dov Levin (right) and trustee Ori Slonim at yesterday's Tel Aviv press conference announcing that the fund has started to hand out checks to beneficiaries of Holocaust victims. (Israel Hadari)

"I don't know if the amount in the fund is enough to meet the needs of all those we are intended to help. If there is a need, this amount will increase," Levin said. Of the 4,072 appeals to the fund.

only 743 are from individuals who believe they are beneficiaries of policy holders. Most of the applications are from those the fund will assist after it compensates policy holders: needy Holocaust survivors and organizations that assist survivors or memorialize the Holocaust.

Lantzman said that 440 of the 743 completed the forms Generali sent them and that the fund is in the process of investigating their claims.

The fund has received most of the material it needs to investigate claims, Levin said. A list of the approximately 300,000 policies that were taken out during the war years has been computerized, he said, though the committee has not yet received it.

"We are looking for a way to reach more people, to let people know that they have the right to turn to us," Levin said, adding that the ads printed in newspapers around the world last April did not bring in a sufficient response.

Lantzman emphasized that it is impossible to know how many of the 300,000 were Holocaust victims. However, Yad Vashem Chairman Avner Shalev said in September that at least 100,000 of the policies belonged to Jews killed in the Holocaust.



Baptism on the Jordan

Members of Israel's Ethiopian Orthodox Christian community and pilgrims from abroad pay a post-Christmas visit to the traditional site of the Baptism at the Jordan River near Jericho yesterday. The Ethiopians were among some 5,000 Orthodox Christians visiting the site, which is in a closed military area and opened to special groups. As Jordanian soldiers looked on from the east bank of the river, the visitors first held a service opposite the Ethiopian monastery, which was damaged in a terror raid in 1970.

(Text: Haim Shapiro, Photo: Brian Henders)

Swiss publish Holocaust names whose assets were pooled

BERN (AP) — The Swiss government yesterday published on the Internet the names of 580 people of Eastern European origin who owned or were agents for owners of Swiss bank accounts pooled for charity nearly 40 years ago.

Surviving account holders or their heirs may file claims until September 30 for compensation by the Swiss government. Swiss officials have estimated some 7 million Swiss francs (\$5.11m.) could be paid out to claimants.

The effort is separate from a long-running Swiss bank campaign to return the assets of Holocaust victims. Under that program, the banks in 1997 published account information on assets worth 67m. Swiss francs (\$48m.) and received more than 12,500 claims.

The 1997 publications included about 5,500 names from outside Switzerland during the Nazi era in

Germany and another 10,000 names of dormant accounts opened by Swiss citizens.

The names disclosed yesterday were mainly those of East Europeans whose unclaimed assets were pooled into a humanitarian fund.

Claim forms can be printed out from the Internet and sent to Swiss embassies or to the Swiss foreign ministry, which will rule on the validity of the claims. The compensation paid will be the value of the account with interest at a rate of 3.5% per year.

The interest rate was devised to reflect a fair increase in the value of the deposits, taking into account that the money was used only for humanitarian purposes and that no one profited from holding it, officials said.

The money stems from a 1962 effort to find Holocaust assets.

Swiss financial institutions were required to hand over to the government deposits unclaimed since the end of World War II.

Under intense international criticism in recent years, banks renewed the search and uncovered far more dormant accounts.

The Swiss Bankers Association says it is now "confident that the vast majority of dormant assets from the period prior to 1945 have been identified." The funds were put into a central fund, which totaled about 3m. francs (\$2.2 m.). The money was later given to Swiss Jewish and refugee charities.

The government says all cases can be compensated. But account owners who lived in Poland and Hungary will be excluded as those countries have already been compensated for the assets and are themselves searching for those affected, it added.

Irish prime minister arrives today

Jerusalem Post staff and news agencies

Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern is due to arrive at Ben-Gurion Airport at three o'clock this afternoon, and will be given an official reception by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at the Prime Minister's Office an hour later.

The reception will be followed by a working meeting with Netanyahu, after which Ahern is to meet with Labor MK Shimon Peres at the King David Hotel. Ahern is then invited to an official dinner at the hotel hosted by Netanyahu, which is to begin at eight-thirty p.m.

Yesterday, during his visit to Lebanon, Ahern said his country would work to build peace in the Middle East and urged Israel and the Palestinians to adhere to the UN-brokered Wye River accord.

He made the comments to reporters during a visit to the southern Lebanese village of Kana, 11 kilometers north of the Israeli border, where he laid a wreath at the mass grave for victims of a mistaken Israeli artillery barrage. On April 18, 1996, IDF gunners returning fire at Hizbullah gunmen killed 106 civilians taking shelter at a UN compound in Kana, not far from where the Hizbullah men were hiding.

Among others, a 70-year-old woman in a wheelchair, who said she lost 16 family members — and her own arm and leg — in the attack, was brought forward. Ahern described the incident as a "terrible massacre and terrible tragedy."

"In our country, we have seen many years of violence," Ahern said of the conflict in Northern Ireland. "It's not easy for people to go through this torment."



Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern speaks with Lebanese boy Ibrahim Bourji while visiting the memorial at Kana in southern Lebanon yesterday. (AP)

Ahern later visited the Irish unit of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon, and laid wreaths at memorials for the more than 200 UNIFIL and 38 Irish peacekeepers killed on duty in Lebanon.

He suggested that the best avenue for regional peace would

be to work through the United Nations and the European Union "so that you can live and work your farms and work your daily lives in a peaceful way." He also said all parties must see that "the Wye River agreement is not left aside."

Haredim attack child molester

By AMY KLEIN

A Jerusalem cab driver who was attacked by a group of haredim on Sunday night admitted yesterday he had fondled a nine-year-old girl from their community, police said.

Dozens of haredi men attacked 53-year-old Ovadia Cohen in his cab late Sunday night in the city's Kiryat Zans neighborhood, pulling him from the cab and beating him.

After police and an ambulance team extricated him and brought him to Hadassah-University Hospital, Ein Kerem, the haredim overturned the cab. Cohen was admitted to the hospital with minor injuries.

Haredim at the scene said he had molested a girl from the neighborhood, according to police spokesman Shmuel Ben-Ruby.

Police questioned Cohen yesterday after he was released from the hospital. They said he admitted touching the girl's buttocks while she walked past on the street.

Cohen, who lives in the Bayit Vagan neighborhood and is religiously observant, was convicted twice of molestation charges, in 1978 and 1987, but did not serve time in prison for either conviction. Yesterday, police released Cohen on bail and on condition he does not return to Kiryat Zans, saying they intend to charge him.

Police yesterday also interrogated one of the haredi men who attacked Cohen. They are searching for others who were involved, with the possible intention of putting them on trial.

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The fat and the eurocat

As the president of the European Union Commission emerged from last week's censure vote in the European Parliament, it was a pleasure to see how shaken he looked. And about time, too.

Jacques Santer is one of those affable, if infinitely boring, Eurocrats who, before the advent of the euro currency, seemed to embody the very essence of the European Union's shifty, secretive, arrogant, don't-bother-me-with-real-people, ruling executive body.

From its perked-up, ink-lined ivory tower in Brussels, the commission's 20 appointed and unelected executives have dispensed decrees like some collective Boris Yeltsin at a party celebrating the invention of vodka. The party's over. It's sober up time in Brussels.

To recapitulate last week's column on this subject — it seemed for a while that the 626-member European Parliament might throw out the entire commission over allegations of fraud, cronyism, and mismanagement. What really riled the MEPs (members of the European parliament) was the commission's high-handed firing of the auditor who brought the scams to the notice of the parliament when the commission refused to take his report seriously.

Scalpers scalped

In the event, parliament did not exercise what one Irish MEP called its "nuclear option" of blasting all the commissioners, good and bad, into euro-obscure last Thursday.

But this was no backdown. The 232 members who voted to throw the rascals out may have been somewhat short of the required two-thirds majority, but it left the rascals quaking.

The parliamentary censure motion came only a week after the launch of the European Union's single currency, the euro. Strasbourg has delivered a sharp and timely warning to Brussels that this is taxpayers' hard-earned euros that are slipping through some commissioner's grubby paws, and that things are going to be different from now on.

In the past, a voter in the Netherlands might not have known or cared if a few million Greek drachmas did a soft-shoe-shuffle into some bottomless pocket or purse in Brussels. But with everyone using the same currency, a farmer in Galway or a reindeer herder in Lapland is more likely to say "they, those are my hard-earned euros you're talking about."

But who could they turn to? Just in time, the Euro cavalry came charging over the hill from Strasbourg. They may not have massacred the fast-fiddling Indians this time, but they have left them nervously fingering their own scalps for a change.

News break

For most of the time since the European Union was founded,

its parliament has been regarded as some sort of Great House in the Sky where we tell the children old politicians go when we don't see them around any more. Periodic elections for MEPs across the 15-nation union raise voter turnout marginally less impressive than those for elections to the town council of Little Puddington-on-Sea. Once elected, MEPs appeared to vanish from their native soil. The Euro-parliament has been to journalists what black holes are to astronomers — a dark place that sucketh in all understanding. Hence the lobby of the elegant parliament in Strasbourg had never seen anything like last week's scenes —

Column One



Thomas O'Dwyer

massed media camped out on the floor and obscure MEPs being pursued down corridors by curious cameras. The House has now passed some rite of passage — it has been a lead story on the BBC and CNN, and those buffies down in Brussels had better take care of their attitude in future.

What a pleasure it was to see the commissioners lined up on front-row seats in parliament like some bad boys and girls summoned before the headmaster.

Double digit

When Santer emerged after being roasted on the grill, his voice and body language told two different stories. His voice said that the parliamentary censure vote was "a vote of confidence in the commission," but his body said "that really was scary and now I'd like to go home and change my pants."

Santer had helped bring it all upon himself and his buddies. Last month, in a procedural motion which at the time aroused as much interest as a debate on olive sizes, the parliament declined to rubber stamp the commission's accounts for 1996, because the commissioners declined to explain allegations of mismanagement.

How dare these upstarts. Santer had responded with an implied sneer that the wimpy parliament had a choice — it could either support the commission or (ha ha!) it could remove it. The commissioners then added a raised digit by firing the auditor who had tipped off the MEPs about corruption. Ha ha! Wrong answer! The parliament has demonstrated power and authority that surprised even itself. The commissioners have not been acquitted. They have been shaken to the depths of their expense accounts and put on strict probation. They have to accept an independent committee of experts to look into their murky procedures, and parliament will again review the 1996 accounts in a few months' time.

The mouse has roared at last, and for a change it is the eurocats that are trembling. European voters have been asking one another in surprise: "Was that our voice we just heard?" It was indeed. Let's hear more of it.

The real goals of Desert Fox

Defense analyst William M. Arkin describes how UNSCOM information helped the US and Britain target the Iraqi regime during last month's bombing operation

When US bombs and missiles fell on Iraq on the evening of December 16, one of their principal targets was Saddam Hussein's sleeping quarters on the outskirts of Baghdad.

But that was only one of the sites on the military's list of places to bomb in the sprawling Radwaniyah complex, adjacent to the now-vacant Saddam International Airport.

The targeting list was stunning in its specificity. Bombs were dropped on separate buildings that house secret units of the infamous Special Security Organization (SSO) and the Special Republican Guards (SRG), including the barracks of the 5th Battalion of the 1st Brigade, the 8th Battalion of the 2nd Brigade, the Artillery Battalion, and the 1st Armored Battalion of the 4th Brigade.

Thanks to the hard work of the United Nations Commission (UNSCOM), US targeters know a lot more about the Iraqi regime today than they did during the Gulf War in 1991. The US and Britain now have a diagrammatic understanding of the Iraqi government structure, as well as of the intelligence, security and transport organizations that protect the Iraqi leadership.

The same mission folders that UNSCOM put together to inspect specific buildings and offices in its search for concealed Iraqi weapons of mass destruction (WMD) became the basis for the targeting folders that missile launchers and pilots used in December.

Welcome to the true Operation Desert Fox.

It is clear from the target list, and from extensive communications with almost a dozen officers and analysts knowledgeable about Desert Fox planning, that the US-British bombing campaign was more than a reaction to Saddam's refusal to cooperate with UNSCOM's inspectors.

The official rationale for Desert Fox may remain the "degrading" of Iraq's ability to produce weapons of mass destruction and the "diminishing" of the Iraqi threat to its neighbors.

But careful study of the target list tells another story. Thirty-five of the 100 targets were selected because of their role in Iraq's air defense system, an essential first step in any air war, because damage to those sites paves the way for other forces and minimizes casualties all around.

Only 13 targets on the list are facilities associated with chemical and biological weapons or ballistic missiles, and three are southern Republican Guard sites that might be involved in a repeat invasion of Kuwait.

The heart of the Desert Fox list (49 of the 100 targets) is the Iraqi regime itself: a half-dozen palace strongholds and their supporting cast of secret police, guard and transport organizations.

Some sites, such as Radwaniyah, had been bombed in 1991 (Saddam's quarters there were designated "LOI" in Desert Storm, meaning the first target in the leadership category).

Other sites, particularly "special" barracks and units in and around downtown Baghdad and the outlying were bombed for the first time.



Iraqis in Baghdad watch Saddam Hussein deliver a speech marking the eighth anniversary of the the Gulf War this week. Thanks to UNSCOM, US targeters know a lot more about the Iraqi regime today than they did during the war in 1991. (AP)

National security insiders, blessed with their unprecedented intelligence bonanza from UNSCOM, convinced themselves that bombing Saddam's internal apparatus would drive the Iraqi leader around the bend.

"We've penetrated your security, we're inside your brain," is the way one senior administration official described the message that the US was sending Saddam.

Without the target list, such a view seems like sheer bravado. With the target list, a host of new questions arises: Is the administration's view of Saddam's hold on power in line with reality? And what is the feasibility, not to mention the legality, of what amounts to an aerial assassination strategy?

THE origins of the Desert Fox target list go back to October, when high-level discussions in Washington led to the conclusion that military action was not only inevitable, but that it might actually achieve something.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff and the US Central Command (CENTCOM), headquartered in Tampa, Fla., began to articulate the military mission of "degrading" and "diminishing" Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.

Gen. Anthony Zinni, the CENTCOM commander, insisted that the United States only bomb Iraqi sites that had been identified with a high degree of certainty, according to officers involved in the process.

Given the UNSCOM data flowing in, there was no end of choices. Seven broad target categories were created, including two — "WMD security" and "command and control" — that would accom-

modate the new intelligence reports and cover an effort to shake the Iraqi regime to its core.

By November, a plan was in place. WMD targets themselves were small in number, given Zinni's directive. The main emphasis would be on Iraq's short-range missile program. US intelligence had concluded that Iraq was using the short-range facilities as a cover for redeveloping long-range missiles.

All of the suspected facilities —

and two airfields — Al Sahara near Tikrit and Tallil in the south — which were believed to house drone aircraft that could deliver a biological cloud in an attack.

HOW could a 70-hour bombing campaign possibly generate an outcome that the utter defeat of the Iraqi army and tens of thousands of air strikes over 43 days failed to deliver?

The answer is again in the target list — and in the administration's

Chiefs of Staff, calls them "highly visible symbols of the regime", but the 1998 campaign locked in on sites not even known eight years ago.

For example, the office of Abed Hamid Mahmoud, Saddam's chief of staff, was attacked, albeit under the innocuous target name of "Secretariat Presidential Building." The SSO computer center as well as intelligence archives also were targeted.

In 1991, only two installations associated with the protection of Saddam were hit. In Desert Fox, this group makes up 20 percent of the total of all targets.

More than a dozen eavesdropping and jamming units, telephone exchanges, and radio and television transmitters were attacked in Baghdad, Basra and the south. Abu Ghraib, Rashidiya (just north of the capital) and Tikrit.

Part of the goal of disrupting telephone and television service was to impede military communications and undermine Iraqi propaganda efforts. But attacking secret police archives and intelligence stations also has the purpose of disrupting Baghdad's ability to monitor the internal situation.

Desert Fox pleased many active and retired officers who played a role in the 1991 air war. These Desert Storm insiders say they feel vindicated by the administration's decision to target the Iraqi leadership.

They felt they were held back from going after Saddam in earnest in 1991, and argue that the US and the world is still paying the price for Washington's hesitation at the time. (The Washington Post)

The same mission folders that UNSCOM put together to inspect specific buildings and offices in its search for concealed Iraqi weapons of mass destruction became the basis for the targeting folders that missile launchers and pilots used in December

Ibn al Haytham, Karama, Al Kindi in Mosul, Shahiyat, Taji and Zaafaraniyah — were under UNSCOM camera monitoring. In fact, UNSCOM had cataloged specific pieces of irreplaceable equipment that, if destroyed, would set back any conversion effort.

There were non-missile WMD targets as well: the Biological Research Center at Baghdad University, which UNSCOM concluded was the office of the head of Iraq's biological weapons program ("Doctor Germ," they dubbed her),

belief that ever more accurate bombs and unprecedented target data can have far-reaching reverberations.

Desert Fox's most significant departure from Desert Storm is its targeting of offices associated with Saddam's entourage and advisers, the Iraqi intelligence and Ba'ath party organizations, and the security and transport apparatus that is so essential for Saddam's survival. Many of these top-level targets were hit in 1991 (Gen. Henry Shelton, chairman of the Joint

Malaysian reform movement shifts tactics

By BENJAMIN LOW

Of the city streets and back to the villages. Cowled by police batons and tired of fighting anti-government demonstrators in the Malaysian capital of Kuala Lumpur say they have not given up the fight, just shifted tactics.

"To say that the feelings are dying, that is rubbish!" an irate 30-year-old management consultant said.

He was one of thousands who took to Kuala Lumpur's streets after Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad expelled his former protégé, Anwar Ibrahim, from the cabinet in September.

At that time, Anwar's supporters thronged to his suburban home, spontaneously taking up the rally cry "reformasi" (reform) which they borrowed from Indonesian students whose street protests helped topple former President Suharto in May.

Unprecedented in Malaysia, where Mahathir has ruled with a strong grip since 1981, the demonstrations grew in size until 30,000 protesters led by Anwar marched through the streets on September 20, shouting for Mahathir to step down.

That night, police commandos wearing hoods and carrying automatic weapons broke down the door to Anwar's house and arrested him.

Nine days later, he was charged with sodomy and corruption. He has pleaded not guilty to the

charges, and is standing trial on some of them in the capital's High Court.

"Reformasi" demonstrations filled the capital's streets, drawing police baton charges and water cannon faced with eye-irritating chemicals and indecipherable yellow dye. On October 24, at least 14 people were injured and more than 240 demonstrators were arrested during clashes.

The violence was unusual in Malaysia, where the last race riots in 1969 left social and political scars still visible today.

"Who wants to get their heads knocked off?" said the consultant, who — like most others interviewed — asked not to be identified.

"We have stopped because it is not good to confront the police who are our fellow Malays and Muslim brothers," said a 30-year-old engineer who created a "Laman Reformasi" webpage.

The engineer's words underscored one of the significant features of the protest movement: Anwar's supporters are largely Muslim Malays who form the core of Mahathir's United Malays National Organization (UMNO).

The organization has dominated Malaysian politics since independence in 1957.

Many blamed the halt of reformasi demonstrations in the capital on crackdowns by baton-wielding police who arrested more than 500 people. The protesters accused the police of using unnecessary force

in making many of the arrests. Fatigue and frustration have also taken their toll.

"Unless all 22 million people protest, Mahathir is not going to step down," a 30-year-old stockbroker said.

"Reformasi" supporters said the movement was shifting its attention to the rural heartland and outskirts of the city ahead of general elections, scheduled to take place by April 2000.

THE movement's members including Anwar's wife, Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, have stopped short of forming a new political party, fearful such a move could split the opposition and play into the hands of Mahathir's National Front coalition.

Anwar's wife last month formed the Movement for Social Justice (ADIL), a new non-governmental organization to press for reforms, both political and social.

In another show of change in tactics, ADIL held its first major public meeting on Saturday in a luxury Kuala Lumpur hotel, but promised to remain apolitical, for now.

"We need a political party, but for now it is just a movement. This movement says that we need to fight for justice for everyone," she told a cheering crowd of over 1,400.

The movement will also campaign on political issues, she told the ADIL supporters, packed into the hotel ballroom. "When it comes to elections, it is a different

story," she said.

The five-hour gathering, at which euphoric supporters hunted for autographs from Wan Azizah and cheered Anwar's defense lawyers, was ADIL's first major public meeting and the first at which Anwar's supporters were not dispersed by police.

"This response is unprecedented. The government thought the movement was dead, but it is alive and kicking," said a political analyst who declined to be identified.

Political analysts at the meeting said ADIL might be able to bring together opposition parties whose inability to unite has contributed to their failure in mounting a credible challenge to the ruling National Front government.

The National Front have successfully indoctrinated the public that anything from the opposition is bad and should be rejected," said one 30-year-old teacher and creator of a Reformasi website.

ADIL has found it difficult to reach residents of the poorer outskirts who have little access to the Internet, the movement's main means of communication.

But members, mostly from Malaysia's educated middle class, said they were confident they will find support.

"We are middle class and educated. Mahathir might win the upcoming election but he has lost the people who will continue his legacy. In fact, in our hearts, he has no legacy at all," the teacher said. (Reuters)

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Yugoslavia declares US official 'undesirable' Kosovo peace verifier ordered to leave

BELGRADE (AP) — The Yugoslav government on yesterday ordered the American head of the Kosovo peace mission to leave the country within 48 hours, after he accused Serb forces of massacring ethnic Albanians.

In a statement distributed by the official Tanjug news agency, the Yugoslav federal government said William Walker had "flagrantly" violated his mandate to oversee compliance with the October 12 Kosovo peace accord.

"The federal government... has decided to proclaim William Walker an undesirable person which binds him to leave the territory of Yugoslavia within 48 hours," the statement said.

There was no immediate reaction from Walker, who has vocally criticized Yugoslav officials since last week's massacre of 45 ethnic Albanian civilians in the Kosovo village of Racak.

Earlier yesterday, Serb security forces backed by tanks and artillery pounded the hills surrounding Racak, ignoring NATO demands for an end to the onslaught.

Yugoslav border guards, meanwhile, refused to allow chief UN war crimes prosecutor Louise Arbour to enter the country from Macedonia to probe the weekend massacre. Arbour flew yesterday to the Macedonian capital of Skopje and drove to the border accompanied by officials of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, but they were denied entry.

In Geneva, the UN relief agency said about 3,500 civilians were fleeing the latest fighting in villages around Racak, where the bodies of 45 ethnic Albanians were found Saturday. UN officials said two infants died Sunday night from exposure.



A Serbian police unit marches yesterday toward Stimlje, some 25 km south of Pristina. (AP)

In New York, the UN Security Council called an emergency meeting yesterday, at Albania's request, to discuss the Kosovo massacre.

The Albanian government accused Serbs in Yugoslavia of "experimenting with the mass annihilation" of ethnic Albanians, who comprise an estimated 90 percent of the 2 million people in Kosovo.

In a letter to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, Albanian Foreign Minister Paskal Milo urged "quick and effective UN intervention aimed at easing tensions and solving the crisis" in Kosovo.

Ethnic Albanian guerrillas fired a rocket yesterday at a Serb patrol near the town of Kosovska Mitrovica, 40 kilometers northwest of the provincial capital of Pristina, wounding

five policemen, according to the Serb Media Center. Ethnic Albanian sources confirmed the attack.

New fighting to the north and south of Pristina also has raised new fears that a three-month-old, US-negotiated peace agreement is near collapse.

Early yesterday, Serb forces unleashed sporadic tank and artillery barrages near Racak that continued

intermittently throughout the day, while Serb forces moved into positions on key hills. In Vienna, US Ambassador to the OSCE David Johnson expressed outrage yesterday not only at the massacre of ethnic Albanians, but at Yugoslav authorities' "scandalous attempt to present the cold-blooded slaughter and mutilation of civilians as a military operation against terrorists."

Yeltsin doctors prescribe drugs, not surgery

By MARTIN NESIRKY

MOSCOW (Reuters) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin's doctors decided yesterday to use drugs rather than surgery to treat the bleeding stomach ulcer that has landed him in the hospital and put him under renewed, if predictable, pressure to step down.

Kremlin press secretary Dmitry Yakushkin said by telephone soon after the doctors' meeting ended that the 67-year-old leader's condition at Moscow's elite Central Clinical Hospital was listed as satisfactory. He was taken there on Sunday.

"The doctors confirmed the diagnosis and worked out some recommendations, including prescribing drug treatment for the president," Yakushkin said.

Yeltsin has already handed day-to-day management of Russia to Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov, but retains control of the security forces and the world's second

largest nuclear arsenal.

Under the constitution, the prime minister would take charge for three months pending a new presidential election if Yeltsin dies, is impeached, or is incapacitated.

Although Yeltsin's absence may alter little in the battered economy, an early election could distract the country, sideline would-be foreign investors, and further drain state finances.

Yet some economic analysts believe an early vote would end uncertainty and possibly put Primakov in the Kremlin. Primakov, an ex-spy-master and foreign minister, is seen by many as a factor of stability in the vast, disparate Russian Federation.

Gennady Zyuganov, leader of the Communist Party and a presidential contender, reiterated calls for powers to be transferred to Primakov and for an early election.

"The less he interferes in day-to-

day life and real politics, the faster the country will return to health," Zyuganov told reporters.

Yeltsin's term ends in mid-2000 and his aides have repeatedly made clear he intends to tough it out until then.

His rivals, including Zyuganov, said his latest illness is scarcely news and does not alter their political game plans.

Moscow mayor Yuri Luzhkov, an erstwhile Yeltsin ally, said it is up to the president to decide on his own political future.

Yeltsin's absence and opposition demands for a more visible, active president already threaten to overshadow budget talks and a visit by an International Monetary Fund (IMF) mission.

The draft budget was passed on its first of four required readings by the State Duma lower house of parliament. The second reading is due today, a day before the IMF arrives.

Witnesses may be 'inevitable' at Clinton trial

WASHINGTON (AP) — Conceding witnesses "may be inevitable," Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle said yesterday, that if Senate Republicans choose to have live testimony at President Bill Clinton's impeachment trial Democrats might object to placing limits on who can be summoned.

"Who are we to tell either the House or the White House how they're going to run their case?"

Daschle asked in an interview with AP.

Daschle said he continues to believe witnesses are unnecessary but acknowledged the political momentum was moving toward having some witnesses.

White House lawyers were busy yesterday putting the final touches on their opening arguments, set to begin when the trial resumes today.

Schroeder OKs design of Holocaust memorial

BERLIN (AP) — Chancellor Gerhard Schröder has thrown his support behind a design for Germany's national Holocaust memorial, a crucial step toward completion of the controversial, long-delayed project.

The design, by New York-based architect Peter Eisenman, envisions a cemetery-like field of close-set concrete pillars, in the middle of which will stand a Holocaust research center.

Schroeder "definitely supports it — on the whole he really approves of the plan," Sibylla Quack, of the government press office, said yesterday. Germany's top cultural official, Michael Naumann, reached agreement on the design with Eisenman last week and presented the plan on Friday to government leaders.

Germany's lower house of parliament must approve the plan before construction begins at a government-donated site in central Berlin, a plot of land near the Brandenburg Gate about the size of two football fields.

This latest plan — to combine a monument with a research center — comes after 10 years of debate over the planned memorial, with critics questioning everything from its design to its location.

Many leading intellectuals criticized plans for a monument, saying a large piece of sculpture was neither reflective nor educational enough for an atrocity as sweeping as the Holocaust.

Eisenman originally had proposed only the large field of concrete pillars, a plan supported by former Chancellor Helmut Kohl. Schröder's new government, however, had leaned toward a museum or research center, and Eisenman agreed to adapt his design.

Iran leader urges factions to end row over killings

TEHRAN (Reuters) — Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei yesterday called on conservatives and moderates to end a bitter row over the killings of dissidents.

Khamenei's call for calm came amid public concern over a new wave of killings in Tehran which did not appear to be political in nature.

There was wide concern among residents of the capital after more gruesome murders in which a prominent elderly engineer and his wife, and the wife of a prize-winning translator were killed at their homes by unknown intruders last week.

Newspapers have given wide coverage to the murders, in which no suspects have been arrested, and the earlier killing of a prominent physician who lived in the same high-security Tehran district as President Mohammed Khatami.

They also reported that Reza Alijani, editor of the liberal Islamist monthly *Iran-e Farda*, had received death threats by unknown telephone callers, who claimed to be from a little-known hard-line group which has hailed the dissidents' killing and voiced similar threats against Khatami.

The row and the new killings have created an atmosphere of uncertainty among Tehran residents and featured strongly in newspapers as Iran prepares to mark the 20th anniversary of its Islamic revolution next month.

"Our dear and pious nation must stand hand in hand behind our committed officials and not allow their unity to be breached," Khamenei told worshippers at mass prayers marking the end of Ramadan. "Those who would like to serve their short-term interests by making waves in this calm ocean and causing disturbances

should know that they will gain nothing from this."

The dissidents' murders and revelations that death squads, including agents from the conservative-run Intelligence Ministry, were involved have provoked an open row between moderates backing Khatami and his conservative opponents.

The row has also led to an attack by Islamic hard-liners who prevented a senior pro-Khatami cleric from delivering a Friday sermon in the central city of Isfahan.

Moderates have demanded a purge of the Intelligence Ministry and suggested that hard-liners carried out the murders of dissidents to destabilize Khatami's reformist government.

Conservatives have denied the charges. Some hard-liners have appeared on state television and accused Khatami's backers of involvement in the killings, in which two outspoken dissidents and at least two liberal writers died. A committee set up by Khatami to probe the killings urged an end to the recriminations and said late on Sunday that none of Iran's mainstream factions were behind the murders.

"The decisions of those who organized and carried out the murders were taken in their own circles, and in depth investigations show that no political groupings or factions had any involvement in these acts," the Iranian news agency IRNA quoted the state committee as saying in a statement.

At Friday prayers, Khamenei urged calm, but he also called on clerics not to raise "divisive issues" in sermons.

He was referring to the Isfahan incident in which stone-throwing militants stopped a sermon by Ayatollah Jaleddin Tabari, the only big-city cleric who openly backs Khatami's liberal political and social reforms.

WORLD in brief

Officials say Kurdish leader is not in Russia

MOSCOW (AP) — Russian officials yesterday were checking reports that Kurdish rebel leader Abdullah Ocalan had made a stopover in Russia on his way to another country, perhaps Libya. The Italian premier's office on Saturday announced Ocalan's departure from Italy without giving details. Ocalan had been wanted by Turkey for terrorist offenses. Turkish security officials and media reports in Italy and Russia said Ocalan was headed for Moscow. The ITAR-Tass news agency yesterday quoted an unidentified senior Kremlin official as saying that Ocalan was not staying in Russia.

Russia accuses West of helping Iran

MOSCOW (AP) — Russia fought back against American claims that it is providing weapons technologies to Iran, accusing the West of helping Iran develop missiles instead, according to an interview published yesterday. Federal Security Service spokesman Alexander Zdanovich said Germany's Botenz and Schaefer Maschinenfabrik supplied Iran with equipment that can be used in the manufacture of ballistic missiles and rocket engines. Zdanovich also accused Swiss companies Robofarm, Robofil, and AGIE of providing technology that "enables the production of parts and components for liquid-fuel rocket engines," according to the interview in *Segodnya*. Zdanovich also insisted that Russia is not guilty of helping Iran develop weapons of mass-destruction.

Pinochet case to reopen in British high court

LONDON (AP) — Lawyers for the Spanish and British governments yesterday asked the House of Lords to consider allegations of crimes committed before Gen. Augusto Pinochet seized power in deciding whether he is entitled to immunity from arrest. A seven-judge tribunal in Britain's highest court is again considering the fate of the former Chilean dictator, who is fighting extradition to Spain on a warrant alleging crimes against humanity committed by his secret police during his 1973-1990 rule.

The court was deeply embarrassed last month when, with the eyes of the world watching, it took the unprecedented action of vacating its own 3-2 ruling denying Pinochet immunity as a former foreign head of state.

Zimbabwe ex-president sentenced for sodomy

HARARE (AP) — A judge yesterday sentenced former president Canaan Banana to a year in prison on gay sex charges, provided he pay compensation and commit no more offenses.

Banana, 63, a Methodist minister and theology professor who served as ceremonial president for seven years after independence in 1980, showed no emotion during sentencing. His lawyers promised an appeal.

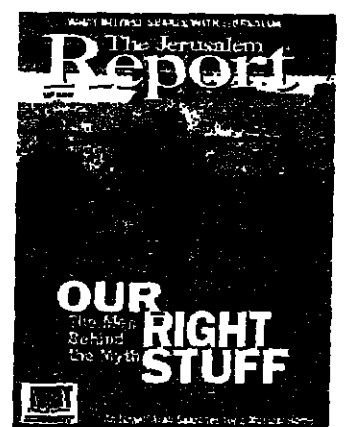
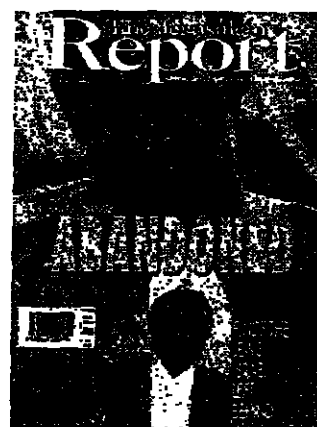
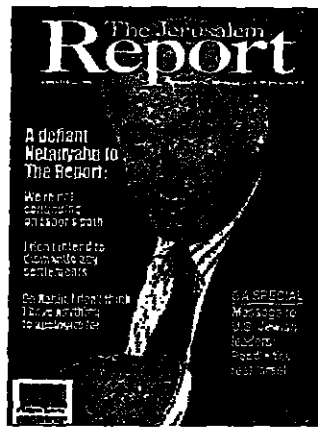
Judge Godfrey Chidyausiku later set bail at 250,000 Zimbabwe dollars (NIS 24,000) in cash, with the title deed of Banana's mansion in the upscale suburb of Mount Pleasant to provide additional security. Banana's lawyers described the bail as excessive and said they would appeal it also. Chidyausiku remanded Banana under continued house arrest until the bail appeal is heard.

No date was set.



Canaan Banana (AP)

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No economic alternative

When elections are announced, it is as if a starter's gun has gone off announcing the race for the government's coffers. The 14th Knesset may have voted itself out of office, but its members are not leaving before a final attempt to spend their way to reelection.

On Sunday, the Knesset Finance Committee failed to pass the arrangements bill, a companion measure to the budget, because of multiple efforts to torpedo money-saving measures, add new spending, and a desire on the part of the haredi parties to pressure the coalition over the composition of religious councils. Suddenly, government and opposition are as one in their fear of alienating a single voter, and in their desire to buy what voters they can.

It is difficult to pass a budget in the best of times, and so it is perhaps not surprising that election frenzy has stalled the process. Since January 1, the government has been living without a budget. As a result, it is prohibited from making investments, hiring new people, funding research and development, or contracting new infrastructure projects. The government has a difficult time planning ahead under normal circumstances, but without a budget it is prohibited from doing so. Though some argue that not having a budget can help protect the public from an election-driven spending binge - which they will have to pay for later on - this is a crude and costly way of enforcing fiscal discipline.

A better solution is for both the opposition and the coalition to consider their real electoral interests, not to mention the national interest, rather than carrying out a parody of what they think the public wants them to do. Perhaps before elections were called, the opposition had an incentive to oppose the budget, or use it as an opportunity to topple the government. Now that the government has fallen, the onus of not having a budget will fall upon the opposition.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's behavior since elections were called is also puzzling. After two years of building up his case in words and actions that the economy must be saved from the fiscal irresponsibility of the previous government, Netanyahu seems to be rushing to catch up with blatantly populist and foolhardy measures of his own. Fortunately, Netanyahu has already backtracked from the most serious-

ly misguided of these - the idea of raising the inflation target. Now Netanyahu is endorsing voices in the Treasury that the current target of 4 percent is reachable, given the low inflation rates of the past two months.

There is no sign yet, however, that Netanyahu is abandoning numerous adjustments to the arrangements bill that will cost the Treasury over NIS 1 billion, and more raids on the taxpayers' pockets may still be in the offing. The Labor Party, rather than opposing these proposals and those of other coalition parties, is joining in the game.

To his credit, Dan Meridor has been critical of the change in the inflation target and "election economics" in general. Neither he nor Amnon Lipkin-Shahak, however, has given any indication that he will part with the do-nothing consensus that has taken over Labor and the Likud.

Perhaps all of this would be more understandable if "election economics" worked, at least from an electoral perspective. In fact, there is scarce evidence that this is the case. True, polls indicate that the public tends to favor short-term economic enticements; but the public did not reward the Labor Party for its largesse with their money under finance minister Avraham Shohat. A shorter spending binge by Likud finance minister Yoram Aridor preceded Menachem Begin's victory in 1981, but was not considered the decisive factor in that win.

Netanyahu came into office offering an economic alternative, started to change the government's course in a positive direction, lost steam, and is now backtracking. The Labor Party seems to have learned enough to abandon its socialist-leaning ideology, but has replaced it mainly with lip-service toward free market principles. The new centrist party, perhaps thinking it must be centrist in all things, seems disinclined to break new ground.

What is missing is a party that will offer the voters what they really need and will be what they ultimately want: a road map to a healthy, stable, high-growth, low-unemployment, low-inflation economy. There is no reason to believe that the public is satisfied with the current state of the economy, yet no party seems to be offering a real alternative.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

SAID'S DANGEROUS PLEA

Sir, - Prof. Edward Said's cleverly evocative plea for a democratic, bicultural polity in which Israelis and Palestinians would live in peace and harmony under law - published in the *New York Times Magazine*, and reported in *The Jerusalem Post*, "Edward Said tells N.Y. Times, 'Palestinian statehood unworkable'" (January 10) - may well appeal to simplistic American suburban "liberals" and to some Israelis on the extreme Left who still nurse Shimon Peres' chimerical dream of a "new" Middle East. But others, less innocent of historical realities, will recognize it as the poison pill

it is. One may safely assume that Said has read the Koran, has at least a passing acquaintance with the fate of minorities in Islamic empires, and is not wholly unfamiliar with the social structures, governmental forms and popular attitudes in the countries neighboring Israel.

And if so, he can hardly offer a sanguine prognosis for his cherished bicultural state - at least insofar as it relates to its Israeli citizens. If nothing else, cultural disparities and the related wide disparity in birth rates would provide the Palestinians with a classic "revenge of the cradle," and what

Said now proposes could not possibly, without recourse to a bloody civil war whose outcome is uncertain, last longer than a few decades.

In short, Said's candy-wrapped pill would, if swallowed, more surely spell the end of free Jewish existence in the Middle East than any other resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict - and quite possibly even more quickly than the dangerous policies advocated by some prominent members of our indigenous Left.

PROF. NORBERT BERKOWITZ
Jerusalem.

FORM OVER SUBSTANCE

Sir, - Thomas O'Dwyer's effusive account of the conference sponsored by the Peres Institute for Peace, "The vision thing" (January 15) is a fine example of the confusion between form and substance that continues to muddle the thinking of so many fine peace-seeking people.

It recalls the euphoria that followed the Oslo Agreements. Shimon Peres and his coterie were wined and dined in marble halls of princes all the way from the Gulf Emirates to Washington, DC, just so long as territories were being transferred to Palestinian control.

That was the form. The substance, back at the ranch, was suicide bombings in public places, drive-by shootings of Israeli families on dark roads, Palestinian murderers of Jews circulating freely in cities of refuge provided by Peres and Yitzhak Rabin, and never time for a friendly visit by Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak to Rabin, prime minister of a country that to this day does not appear on schoolbook maps in Mubarak's country.

On the other hand, "\$60 million-worth of joint Israeli-Palestinian initiative to underpin the peace

process" is plenty of substance. It will be interesting to see if this bundle generates more productivity than the hundreds of millions the PA got after the Oslo Agreement with no noticeable effect on the Palestinian economy. The last big name show that Peres put on before this was the anti-terrorist conference at Sharm el-Sheikh - great form but zero substance. Is anyone placing bets on the results of this one?

MORRIS GOLDMAN
Tel Aviv.

HERE TO STAY

Sir, - Like many writers, David Kimche in "Traditional Divisions" (January 6) confuses two questions: whether peace is desirable, and whether it is attainable. And two more: whether it is attainable, and whether it is attainable by appeasement.

At the moment, we are clearly exchanging not land for peace but land for time. Each parcel of land buys us a certain interval until the next parcel is demanded, and the demands do not become more friendly as our territory shrinks. For those who believe that peace is attainable,

this might be a good moment to consider other ways of attaining it. Maybe convincing the Arabs that we are here to stay would work.

MARK L. LEVINSON
Herzliya.

FROM OUR ARCHIVES

65 years ago: On January 19, 1934, *The Palestine Post* reported details of the Palestine Government's budget for 1934-1935. Jewish institutions, such as educational and health services, were given, as usual, scanty allocations, while grants to the Arab school system were considerably increased.

50 years ago: On January 19, 1949, *The Palestine Post* reported that the Jewish "illegal" immigrants, men of military age, still detained by the British in Cyprus, would be released as soon as Israel provided transport.

25 years ago: On January 19, 1974, *The Jerusalem Post* reported

ed the details of the Israel-Egyptian agreement according to which the separation of forces was to begin within a week and Israel assured Egypt that it would not lay waste the existing installations on the west bank of the Suez Canal.

Alexander Zivli

Liberate the airwaves

EVELYN GORDON

According to press reports, a ministerial committee last week decided to amend the broadcasting laws to permit the establishment of additional national radio stations.

It is far from clear that this decision will ever get off the ground. With the Knesset due to recess next month to allow MKs time to campaign, it is unlikely that anything will be done before the elections.

And after the elections, the idea may well be dropped - especially since its main purpose appears to be legalization of the settlers' pirate radio station, Arutz 7. A left-wing government would have no interest in this, and a Netanyahu government might lose interest once the need to attract right-wing votes had passed.

This would be a shame, however, because the idea of additional

means that access to the national airwaves is extremely restricted.

There is none of the diversity of character that one finds among the written press, which boasts everything from tabloids to hardi papers, in Hebrew, Russian and English - each one different, according to the different character of its owners and readership.

The ministerial committee has decided that the airwaves, too, should be thrown open to a range of "special interest" stations. This would be a tremendous improvement over the current situation. There is no reason at all that the haredim, or the Russians, or the settlers, or any other group should not be allowed to operate their own radio stations, rather than settling for whatever programming the IBA chooses to throw their way.

Of course, there is also no rea-

The proposal for special-interest radio stations is a good first step. Let's take it a step further to permit truly free competition.

national radio stations is excellent - whatever one thinks of the committee's motives.

Currently, the only national radio stations are government owned and controlled. They consist of several channels run by the Israel Broadcasting Authority, plus Army Radio (Galei Zahal).

Though the IBA is ostensibly independent of the government, the various stations it operates are hardly independent of the IBA. This means that most of the nation's radio news, talk shows and other programming is coming from a single monolithic source - whose director-general is chosen by the government.

Army Radio provides the only variation. It, too, is ostensibly independent, but the IDF appoints its top management.

Neither the IBA nor Army Radio is an institutional mouthpiece of the old Soviet variety, and there is no serious danger that either of them ever would be. Nevertheless, this situation is unhealthy from the standpoint of democracy and freedom of expression, because it

son for the public to subsidize such stations, but the committee's plan stipulates that no government funding will be provided - the stations would have to finance themselves through advertising and donations. Even exactly as it stands, therefore, the committee's plan is worthy of support.

HOWEVER, it would be even better if the proposal could be rid of the major conceptual flaw that plagues it: the idea that the government, rather than consumers, should decide which stations will be licensed. This flaw is evident in several different aspects of the plan.

First of all, it is the government that will decide which "special interests" merit a radio station. There is little doubt that major population sectors such as the haredim or the Russians will be on the list. But why shouldn't less obvious interests also have the right to broadcast? If, for instance, someone wanted to try to start an all-jazz station, why should this not be permissible?

Dry Bones



There is little fear of unwanted and esoteric stations cluttering up the airwaves for long, because if demand for a station's programming is not considerable, it will never be able to survive financially.

Secondly, why should there only be one station for each interest group? Both the Russian and the haredi communities, for instance, support several newspapers. If they are also capable of supporting more than one radio station, why should they not be allowed to do so?

A third question is why only "special interest" stations should be allowed in the first place. What is wrong with having privately-owned general news/music/talk show stations of the kind currently run by the IBA and Army Radio?

The final problem, of course, is the fact that the government will decide, through a tender, who will operate each station. It would be much better to adopt the principle used for direct broadcast satellite television - anyone who meets

minimal requirements and can cough up the licensing fee can get a license.

Again, there is little fear of overcrowding the airwaves, since only a limited number of stations will be able to pay the licensing fee. Of these, some will undoubtedly not make it financially, thereby freeing up airwave space for new stations.

Under this system, it is the listeners who would ultimately decide which stations broadcast - not a handful of government clerks on the tender committee.

The ministerial committee's plan would be a giant step forward even if none of its flaws were fixed, because it would end the existing radio monopoly. It is therefore to be hoped that at the least, either this government or the next will speedily enact it.

But it would also be easy to amend the proposal to permit truly free competition on the airwaves. It seems a shame to miss the opportunity.

The still-wandering Jews

YEHIEL GREENMAN

In November 1995, the High Court of Justice struck down all government arguments against registration of conversions done in Israel by the Masorti (Conservative) and Reform movements. It indicated that the reasons given for not registering these people as Jews had no legal standing.

The court at that time, however, did not take the final step of ordering the Interior Ministry to register them. Instead it indicated that, failing a legislative solution by the Knesset within a reasonable time, the next step might well be taken by the court itself.

This, of course, created a political storm here, since it challenged the de facto monopoly of the Orthodox authorities over conversion to Judaism in Israel.

The religious parties then initiated legislation to anchor their monopoly in legislation. This caused consternation and counter-pressure from the Diaspora, where a majority of Jews affiliate with the non-Orthodox movements.

A commission was set up, with representatives of all streams of Judaism, headed by Yaakov Neeman. Compromise proposals were reached, which were subsequently rejected by the Chief Rabbinate. A proposed school for study of Judaism, in which our movement was to have some input, is being planned but has not yet opened.

Meanwhile, hundreds of people whom our rabbis consider Jews, according to Halacha, have been left in limbo by the government because of political expediency. They are not granted formal recognition as Jews in this country, although a majority of Jewish and secular authorities anywhere else in the world probably do or would recognize them as such.

Often the rabbinate here will not consider their further conversion in Orthodox frameworks, because their lifestyle is tainted in their eyes - they are too closely associated with Israeli secular culture. They are too honest - many tell us they come to us to convert because they don't want to lie or pay a bribe - and too intellectually independent. They or their children serve in the army, thus endangering their lives and giving of their precious time and energy to the country, rather than sitting in yeshivot.

They are too honest - many tell us they come to us to convert because they don't want to lie or pay a bribe - and too intellectually independent. They or their children serve in the army, thus endangering their lives and giving of their precious time and energy to the country, rather than sitting in yeshivot.

Not all of them necessarily become good Conservative Jews here in Israel, but most do. Some join Orthodox or Reform congregations; sometimes there is no Masorti com-

munity where they live. But I consider them educational successes because they are identifying as Jews and practicing Judaism.

Some simply decide to blend into the country's Jewish majority and live as secular Israelis. But they have an increased sensitivity to and knowledge of Jewish culture, most often accompanied by some observance in the home. They come back to us to give their kids a Jewish education in a Tali program, they come to us for marriages (unfortunately, they don't have much choice if they want a Jewish marriage), britot, bar mitzvas and funerals.

Naturally, their specific stories are confidential, and they are often concerned about their privacy and shy of publicity. But their tales are sometimes sad, even tragic. These are people who have willingly changed their religion, culture, identity, and lifestyle to join the Jewish people. Often they have been on their spiritual journey for a long time - sometimes since childhood.

Many have Jewish family - a father or grandparent born Jewish - who confided in them about their identity or even encouraged them to identify with the Jews. Twice I've been told by conversion candidates that such a confidence was shared by a dying parent or grandparent whose last wish was that at least one of their descendants rejoice the

Jewish people and go to the Land of Israel. Many of them have family who have perished in the Holocaust.

When asked why they have come to Israel and chosen to identify with the Jews, the answer they give is that they have a sense of destiny and belonging which leads them here, even though it sometimes doesn't seem rational. Often we hear them express a feeling that they should have been Jews and are correcting the mistakes of having been born into the wrong family.

Some time soon, the issue will come before the High Court again - this time before a panel of 11 judges. I pray to God that the wrong done to these people in this country will then be corrected.

But even if that is not the case and the court upholds the idea of a monopoly of the politically appointed Orthodox rabbinate, we will not stop teaching and accepting these people, for we accept the approach of our teacher, Hillel, in this matter, and not that of Shammai.

Sincere converts are to be accepted as fellow Jews, and to be encouraged in their practice of Judaism, not discouraged because of extraneous political agendas and the internal conflicts between Jewish movements for control of resources and the monopoly of their ideology.

The writer is national coordinator of the Masorti Conversion Institute.

Don't play economic blame games

TOM PLATE

Playing the blame game can be a no-win contest. That's especially true when the wrong culprit is blamed.

Asia, which only a few years ago seemed to have economies that could do no wrong, has been viewed as largely responsible for its own current predicament. But the world's fundamental economic worries transcend any one region's problems or mistakes.

Understanding this reality is the key to charting a way out of the crisis.

Until relatively recently, Asia's secretive financing practices and clandestine corporate ways had been universally regarded as the root cause of the Asian financial crisis. No more.

Except for Indonesia, Asia was probably no worse in this regard than any other place. In fact, troubled South Korea actually had better-than-average economic transparency.

So, was widespread Asian cronyism the big factor behind the rolling failures that began in the summer of 1997? Not really, concludes a provocative recent report on the crisis by the United Nations' International Labor Office.

At the same time, as World Bank chief economist Joseph Stiglitz has said, unceasing Western efforts to demonize Asia have a distinctly self-serving feel about them.

"Why is transparency such a focal point?" he asked a private audience at the World Bank in Washington late last year. "It is easier to blame the Asian countries and their banking systems for lack of transparency than to question the policies of Western lenders. There is a lot of hypocrisy."

Rather than trying to lay all the blame on Asia, says MIT Professor Paul Krugman in the current issue of *Foreign Affairs*, try instead to understand the current turmoil this way:

There has been a bad accident on the freeway, and, yes, the perpetrator had a prior speeding conviction on his record. But hundreds of other drivers also have had accidents on this very turn in the freeway, so there must be something basically wrong with the construction design, too.

Were Asian economies really any more transparent, any less given to

crony capitalism in the 1980s, when all was chugging along so nicely, than in the '90s, when many of them hit the wall?

NOWADAYS, there is too much money flowing across borders, too much capital volatility. Or within troubled economies, investment money slows to a trickle as the International Monetary Fund imposes anti-inflation and austerity policies that dry up domestic demand.

As markets fail to generate adequate demand, the world slides further into recession.

Blaming Asia for the financial crisis creates serious problems. One is economic: Misguided hostility can divert attention from what must be done to avoid serious problems both this year and next.

Worldwide demand must be stimulated to avoid the spread of more recession, or worse. A new international system to buffer the most frightening effects of excessive short-term capital flows must be devised quickly. In Latin America right now, both Mexico and Brazil have been rocked by

short-term capital flight.

There is also a political cost. The blame game exacerbates tensions between Asia and America and could even make China's resistance to currency convertibility and avoidance of monetary devaluation positively Confucian in its wisdom.

Krugman, who was among the first to sense the coming of the Asian crisis and then was among the first to sense that Asia could overcome it, is underwhelmed by America's current superficial response.

Despite record stock market increases and record unemployment lows, he finds parallels between today's economic uncertainty and the onset of the Great Depression.

"There is a definite whiff of the 1930s in the air," he says.

Asian nations have by and large accepted the need for internal reform. America must accept the need to rein in certain free-market orthodoxies, including unfettered short-term capital flows and growing suffocating and inflation demands.

If, both sides seek a position of understanding, the no-win blame game can become a win-win situation.

(Los Angeles Times)



Via the Internet, pupils watch the birds fly, in real time, over Lebanon, Jordan, Israel and the PA. (Scoop 80)

Where peace is for the birds

Forget the politicians — it's the bird-lovers who are moving ahead to make peace in the Middle East. Gwen Ackerman reports

The dove may have brought Noah the olive branch, but it could take the combined forces of the stork and the crane to bring friendship to the Middle East.

Typing into their terminals in 40 schools around Israel, seventh, eighth and ninth graders track the birds across friendly and belligerent countries alike. Meanwhile, teachers in Jordan and the Palestinian Authority are setting up the computers that will complete the circle of young bird enthusiasts.

In the very near future, the educators hope, Jordanian, Palestinian and Israeli children will be conversing in bird language — together.

The US Agency for International Development, an independent, government agency, has contributed \$1,050,000 to the project, called "Migrating Birds Know No Boundaries," which has also won the support of Vice President Al Gore and Shimon Peres, who has agreed to be the program's honorary chairman. Lufthansa and Lockheed Martin have helped, as well as the Federal Republic of Germany.

The program's energetic father, Yossi Leshem, an ornithologist and former head of the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel, is sure the birds will be the bridge to real friendship, spark national pride among the children for their country's unique contribution to the birds' migration and, in turn, ensure a healthy future for the migrating birds themselves.

"We are in the business of protecting the environment by bringing people together," Leshem says. "The idea is that the children will first have contact through the computer, exchanging ideas and working together to solve problems posed by the teachers. Then they will go out to Beit She'an or Jericho to watch the birds."

PEERING through telescopes and binoculars and squinting at the sky, Israeli and Palestinian children first met in the Hula Valley in November to watch millions of birds migrate south for the winter. The Israelis came from the Beit

She'an Valley Regional School, and the Palestinians from the Evangelical Lutheran Talitha Kumi School in Beit Jala.

Located at the junction of three continents, Israel and the PA's narrow air space hosts some 500 million migrating birds every year. Through the Internet, the children watch the birds fly, in real time, over Lebanon, Jordan, Israel and the Palestinian Authority, then through Egypt to Africa.

So far, 77 storks bear transmitters that beam up their location to a satellite every 90 minutes. Pelicans, eagles and cranes are also being followed.

The pupils adopt a bird — Ahmed, a stork; Josh, an eagle; Martin, a pelican, and so on — and

the middle of a small, newly planted garden, with the words "May peace prevail on Earth" inscribed on it in English, Hebrew, Arabic and Japanese. Thyme and rosemary were planted here by Israeli and Palestinian children this fall to attract the Palestinian sunbird — a small species similar to the hummingbird.

Down the hill is the start of a nature trail/botanical garden that is to cover some 45 dunams. Olive and almond trees will be planted along side those already growing here, plants that "are part of our heritage," says Imad Atrash, head of the Palestinian arm of the "Migrating Birds Know No Boundaries" triangle.

Atrash's Environmental Education Center, the first of its kind in the Palestinian-ruled

territory, is located on the grounds of Talitha Kumi, will be the Palestinian center for the birds-bring-peace program. Today it is home to 2,500 stuffed specimens of Holy Land fauna, preserved by a German priest some 90 years ago.

The school, which has 1,100 pupils, lies on the eastern route of migrating white storks and birds of prey. The first "Migrating Birds Know No Boundaries" computer center will be set up here, other schools will follow.

But it hasn't been easy getting the Palestinians interested in environmental issues — especially bird-watching — Atrash admits.

"Our people want food, security, water first. They say, we are not going to look for birds — there's no pride in that, no food."

BUT, little by little, Atrash has built up a lobby, one that succeeded in persuading PA Chairman Yasser Arafat to move the dump near Jericho, where garbage was being burned around the clock, to a more remote site where garbage is disposed of in a more modern manner.

And, slowly, he is introducing Palestinian children to their Israeli neighbors.

As director of the Children for the Protection of Nature in Palestine, Atrash has initiated several joint Palestinian-Israeli environmental activities in the past year — including the planting of the herb garden just outside his center.



A Palestinian boy peers through a telescope in the Hula Valley in November. (Yossi Leshem)

None of this has been easy, he says.

"Things move slowly because of the political situation," he says. "When there is bad behavior by the Israeli government the people react. The parents don't want to send their children to joint activities."

"But we need to think about 100 years down the line. If we start now we may reach a high level of environmental education and peace."

Despite his enthusiasm, however, he draws the line at meeting with settlers.

"I am not allowed to talk to settlers about peace," Atrash says. "If they want to talk peace they have to move."

There are also problems of religion, politics and different social mores to be dealt with as well.

"In the discussions between the kids the temperature sometimes rises very high — especially when talk moves to the intifada, the bombings and politics. But we solve the problems together. We tell them that we need to live together with love, respect and understanding," Atrash says.

Learning about birds may be one way. Atrash and a nine-member team are learning the "Migrating Birds Know No Boundaries" Internet site and buying computers with the USAID money.

"Internet is a good solution, but we like the kids to be with each other. Human sense is important. In the first meetings there is always a lot of energy that the kids want to use to connect, and that's what we want."

JORDAN will be the last arm of the project's triangle to join. The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature in Jordan is setting up a data-collecting, bird-watching base in Amman with the USAID money. It hopes to open in the spring.

In the first stage, Palestinian and Jordanian schoolchildren will attend classes at their respective

centers — until similar computerized classrooms are established in their schools.

Meanwhile, Egyptian schools are also beginning to show interest, and a network of weather and bird-radar stations are being set up at key points throughout the Middle East to gather data that will be fed into a central data base that can be accessed by Israel, the PA and Jordan.

At Latrun, Leshem is setting up a major field study center which he hopes will eventually serve the entire region. A computer storage company in Boston, EMC2, has given him a million dollars to build the regional database of bird migration.

Educators hope that Jordanian, Palestinian and Israeli children will very soon be conversing in bird language — together

the tank museum at Latrun, and is manned during migration season almost 24 hours a day.

Together, Latrun, Talitha Kumi and the center in Amman will form a line of birdwatchers 150 kilometers long — enabling ornithologists to make great strides in their study of bird migration.

Leshem hopes, in time, that hundreds of thousands of people will be introduced to the migrating birds at Latrun. And Atrash hopes his center in Beit Jala will become a tourist attraction included in Bethlehem 2000, the PA's main tourism project for the millennium celebrations.

Both men dream of a time when bird-loving tourists from all over the world will take a package tour that follows the route of the migrating birds — not just on the Internet — but through the Hula Valley, Beit Jala, Jericho and Jordan.

The Migrating Birds Know No Boundaries Internet site can be found at <http://www.birds.org.il>

Shopkeepers, brother's keepers

Yehuda's social scene is a shopping mall. For the past decade or so, almost daily, that's where he meets his friends. That's also where he got most of his education.

Sounds pathetic. But for Yehuda, loitering around the Ahim Yisrael Mall in Jerusalem's Talpote industrial zone has not dulled his wits. It has immeasurably stimulated them.

Yehuda, afflicted with Down's Syndrome, is not the sort of character warmly welcomed at a place like this. Many folks secretly wish people like Yehuda would stay out of sight. He's unattractive, his behavior is often graceless; he's capable of galumphing up to a stranger sitting at a coffee shop, slapping him on the back and loudly demanding a cigarette. It would be perfectly understandable if the shopkeepers shooed him away.

Instead, they have taught him to read and write. They feed him. They give him clothes and money and — much more — they give him friendship and warmth and they have grown to love him. They do not shun him: They look him in the eye and touch him and make him feel like a real-live human being.

This sort of generosity is not tax-deductible. Every time Tito gives him a meal, his deli

not want this bull around, it's a china shop. But he lurches in, mixes with the tony ladies among the highly breakable — and pricy — merchandise, and sure enough, even here, he's welcome. Sima says he's never broken anything.

The shopkeepers didn't get together to decide on a policy about Yehuda: it just happened naturally.

Since the mall opened and this odd fellow burst through the door as if he owned the place.

So many of the store owners, it turns out, are kind and caring, and each one, of his own accord, chose to be nice. Soon enough, they realized that everyone was doing it.

Ironically, this did lead to a conference: Yehuda was getting mighty fat on the sandwiches, Cokes, ice cream, cake and chocolates. The shopkeepers met and agreed that it would be better for their friend if they were a little less good to him.

"I used to give him too much food; we all did, then we realized we had to control it," says Tito, owner of the Beit Hapri snack bar.

"Yehuda's simple. He eats until he's ready to burst. He lost his teeth in the last year, so he doesn't eat as much as he used to; as fat as he is now, he used to be twice as big."

"Of course we care about him. Jews are like that." There's another reason for

Rather than shoo Yehuda away, the mall's shopowners have fed him, clothed him, and befriended him

takes a loss. When Yehuda marches into Holi Holi and says he needs socks, Tzadok gives him socks without considering profit.

"He's a part of the scenery here," says Tzadok, a genial man of 49. "Sometimes he doesn't come for a couple of days and everyone asks, 'Yehuda, where've you been?'"

Betty, 21, has been working at Angel's Bakery in the mall for only two months, so it takes her an extra second or two to understand who I'm talking about.

"The fat one? Oh yes. We never say no to him. We feel sorry for him."

Imagine that. It is hard enough to resist the delectable display, the enticing aromas at Angel's, but just think if it were free! Lucky Yehuda.

"Whatever he wants, he gets," Betty says.

"Lucky" is, of course, debatable. To his fellow residents of nearby Beit Jala, he is. He is not, to you and me. He's lucky, among the childlike, because he's got a bulging bellyful of goodies; on the other hand, he has no teeth.

HE'S unsightly, ungainly, disruptive, and a "major nudnik." But go into almost any of the 50-odd shops here and mention Yehuda's name, and they smile warmly.

"Yehudeleh? He doesn't bother us. He comes in, to change money, to write things down for him, to ask for a cigarette. Of course, we help him," says Sima, a sales clerk at Annie, a kitchenware boutique.

If there is a shop that would

Tito's sympathy: his uncle, in Argentina, has Down's.

DAVID Herzberger spends his working day, endlessly dealing with children who come to his shop, Party Time, for gifts and knickknacks. He always finds time and patience for Yehuda.

"We taught him how to add. Nothing much, really," Yehuda, how much is that? "One." "How much is this and this?" "Two." And today he knows. It's amazing.

"We taught him a little bit to read and write, and we play games to test him. We'll write things down incorrectly, and he'll say, 'Hey, it's wrong!'"

He's become more sociable, more alert, says David.

"We gave him a lot of confidence," says Tito. "Everyone in Talpote knows him by now, taxi drivers pass him and shout, 'Hey, Yehuda, how's he doing?'"

The shopkeepers have taught him how to handle himself in public. "Once he came in, yanked off his shoes and loudly demanded new socks," says Tzadok. "It wasn't nice, I was tending to a customer. I want, I want, I want, he says. I explained that, just like everyone, he has to wait his turn. He's learned."

Tito is fatherly to him, even though, at 30, he's a few years younger than Yehuda.

"I love him very much, but sometimes I'll be sharp with him: 'Yehuda not now, I have customers, wait outside!' We get a little angry with him occasionally, but still, he knows this is his home."

Perhaps it's appropriate that this shopping center's name translates as "Israel Brothers."



Along with storks, eagles and cranes, pelicans are tracked by the children, who each 'adopt' a bird, study its route and exchange information.

How can I get my boyfriend back?

Dear Ruthie, I spent all four years of college with the same boyfriend. When we graduated last summer, he asked me to marry him, but I felt we were too young, and that marriage would be too limiting. I had plans for a career and to date other men.

He was hurt, and moved back to Denver. I moved to New York.

But things haven't worked out as planned. I am working in a job I hate, and the dating scene is worse than pitiful.

Now I want my boyfriend back. I'd even be willing to move to Denver and marry him.

But when I got up the nerve to call him and tell him I was wrong about breaking up with him, he told me he was involved with somebody else right now.

He didn't say how seriously. I am crushed, even though I know it's my fault. But how can I get him back? I almost bought a plane ticket to Denver to pay him a surprise visit and beg him to take me back - but my women friends tell me this is not a thing for a Nineties woman to do.

I know they're right, but I can't help feeling the way I do. Fuming Old Flame

New York City

Dear Fuming Flame,

When going forward gets rough, going backwards usually feels safe.

Reverting to familiar patterns is a common response to fear of the future - particularly when the present doesn't appear promising.

Your steady boyfriend and comfortable college career gave you the security to be optimistic about heading for new horizons. You thus viewed your college graduation as a genuine "commencement" and didn't want to be saddled with any baggage on your journey.

But now that you are working in a job you hate and haven't met any men of interest, you feel like someone who has just

Dear Ruthie



Ruthie Blum

let go of a life preserver in the middle of the ocean, only to discover that he's not as good a swimmer as he had thought.

No wonder, then, that you find yourself reaching out for that life preserver again. Nor is it any wonder that you are "crushed" by the knowledge that it has been latched

onto by someone else.

What you have to ask yourself honestly is whether it is this particular life preserver you want, or whether it is the only one you are capable of seeing right now. You might also pause to consider whether you are actually drowning, or just taking time to get used to treading water.

Regardless of what your friends tell you about how a Nineties woman should behave, you need to consider what you stand to gain by throwing your dreams overboard in order to reestablish a foothold in the past.

In the first place, your old flame may not respond to your begging by marrying you. In the second, even if he does, it is likely to end up being a Pyrrhic victory. After all, when your eager sights were set on a brighter future, you opted not to include this man in your plans.

The stormy weather you are having right now is probably just a temporary setback, preparing you for sunnier skies.

As hard as it may be for you to internalize while you're being rained on, a look back at past hardships is sure to help you realize how true it is.

Keep in mind that swimming is harder than being kept artificially afloat. But it is also much more satisfying. And good exercise, to boot.

Letters should be addressed to: "Dear Ruthie," POB 81, Jerusalem 91000. For e-mail: ruthie@jpost.co.il

("Dear Ruthie" also appears in "In Jerusalem and in City Lights on Fridays.")



Baltimore videographer Alex Karas edits film in his studio: He spliced shrimp into a wedding video when the caterer forgot to serve it. (Baltimore Sun)

Making memory fit the image

More and more Americans are turning to videographers to transform their 'life cycle events' into mushy love stories, comedies or breathless music videos straight out of Hollywood. Stephanie Shapiro reports

A funeral isn't the most romantic occasion to meet, nor the most amusing. But in truth, that's where Romina and Tony Cinquina first laid eyes on each other.

In the video they commissioned to chronicle their ensuing romance, however, guests at their wedding witnessed a very different sort of introduction: Tony, an electrician by trade, rushes to Romina's house to fix a faulty fuse, gets shocked, then is kissed back to consciousness by his future bride.

The slapstick scene, which ends with Tony giving the camera a sly wink, was produced for the Ontario, Canada, couple by Toronto-based videographer David Lai. Lai and the couple agreed their true story just wasn't fun enough.

And Lai, a man considered the burgeoning commercial videography industry's Steven Spielberg, wanted fun. He'd already vetoed the idea of a "sweet" love story; that wasn't the way he saw the couple.

Years from now, when the Cinquinas view the video with their grandchildren, the true story of how they met will surely be overshadowed by the fabricated version. But the couple wouldn't have it any other way.

While some families still rely on that klutzy uncle using a hand-held camera to capture hours' worth of monotonous, out-of-focus scenes, elaborately produced video inventions such as the Cinquinas' are becoming more common.

As both the technology and its practitioners grow more sophisticated, more people are turning to an ever-expanding array of professional memory makers, videographers who specialize in transforming "life cycle events" into mushy love stories, madcap comedies and breathless music videos.

Rather than merely document ordinary people celebrating weddings, anniversaries and other milestones, the new video industry - using scripts, headsets, crews, multiple cameras, and sophisticated editing - creates artistic set pieces that turn those ordinary people into celebrities.

"Videographers are like great contemporary painters and artists," says Roy Chapman, a Sarasota, Fla. videographer and founder of the main industry trade group, the Wedding and Event Videography Association.

Chapman's pronouncement notwithstanding, the most adventurous of professional event videos are not yet commonplace.

Still photographers continue to dominate the event market.

But video, still a young business, is far from a cottage industry, Chapman says. And his organization, 4,100 members strong, has established a public relations committee to correct such oversights.

"We're called an industry now," he says. "We're not simply hobbyists or amateurs."

"The most serious professionals in terms of those who do wedding and event videography are extremely dedicated (and interested in) new techniques and new technology."

Pushing the trend to more embellishment and interpretation in videos are worldly clients who have wearied of standard documentary-style fare, says videographer David Robin of Los Angeles.

"Especially in the major metropolitan areas - New York, Chicago and Los Angeles - they've been there and done that. They've seen every single bar mitzva tape. [They want to know] what's next," Robin says.

Imaginative videographers are keen to respond with "newer, fresher stuff," Robin says, like the 60 Minutes-style "expose" of a couple's courtship that his company recently produced.

TECHNOLOGY is another factor fueling more elaborate videos. Over the past five years scores of electronics companies have designed pricey new gear specifically for the video industry.

A serious videographer can easily spend more than \$100,000 on equipment that allows almost unlimited production possibilities.

All this has led to a more amusement-oriented approach to making videos. For increasing numbers of videographers - and their clients - if a life is worth recording, it's worth revising.

It's all part of the phenomenon described by critic Neal Gabler in his book: *Life the Movie: How Entertainment Conquered Reality*.

The videography craze is "perfectly consistent with the entertainment juggernaut. It's simply a way to bring that entertainment

component into people's own lives," Gabler says.

"If it comes at the expense of what we used to call authentic memory, people have to decide what price they want to pay; whether they prefer the movie version of life to the so-called authentic version of life."

THERE is no better place to see the videography industry's transformation than the annual convention of Chapman's group.

During a week in late summer, some 2,500 videographers gather in Miami Beach to hear what their

most cutting-edge colleagues have to say about their profession.

Over the convention's four days, untold numbers of wedding videos - both bold and bland - are screened. In schmaltzy "love walks," couples play themselves as wide-eyed lovers waltzing around fountains, tossing autumn leaves, riding horses across forlorn landscapes, and kissing against bleeding sunsets - a stock view known in the trade as the "Gone With the Wind shot."

In MTV-esque romps, entire wedding parties gallivant through pop fantasies, lip-synching to the B-52s' "Love Shack," tricked out like *Happy Days* greasers.

Among all the videographers gathered here, though, David Lai is clearly the man. Following up on his show-stopping appearance at last year's convention, he has

returned to speak on "How to Shoot Spectacular Love Story Openings."

His company turns out 200 wedding videos a year. Shunning the traditional forms of video documentary, he and his company are more apt to turn a bridal party into the Village People performing "YMCA."

Using "pre-planned concepts" and "segments that appear natural, fun and spontaneous," Lai also produces sentimental "love walks" with assembly-line efficiency.

He may shoot as many as three couples a day in a park or other bucolic setting, putting each through a methodical repertoire of moves: "Smell the rose now... now look at each other... don't look at the camera... look at each other while talking."

Lai's work is then massaged into glossy music videos by editor Walid Soroor, who creates what he calls "emotional, heart-tugging visuals."

David Robin takes the podium at the convention as well, to discuss "How to Create Winning Wedding Demos and Concept Videos That Sell." As a visual aid, he runs his own demo tape.

It's an unabashedly manipulative tear-jerker, and as the tape comes to an end, his colleagues leap to their feet and applaud fiercely. At least one videographer in the audience wipes away tears.

For all the liberating artistic potential offered by increasingly sophisticated technology, it's clear at the convention that, like Robin, most videographers are taking their cues from Hollywood.

"What else is there to borrow from?" Robin asks. "That's our medium. That's how society has given us entertainment, through movies, TV and theater. It's automatic to emulate it."

A COUPLE who hire a videography company knowingly cede control of their emotional lives to a stranger. They also know that videographers have the power to "fix it in the edit."

If sound is flubbed, vows are repeated after the ceremony and

dubbed into the tape. A bride's waddle down the aisle is eliminated with quick cuts.

Once, when a caterer forgot to serve shrimp at their wedding, the distraught couple asked Alex Karas, a Baltimore videographer, "Can you give us shrimp?" Since he had several outtakes, Karas says, it was not a problem. In the edited video, the shellfish take a star turn, fulfilling the couple's imagined memory of their big day.

"Everybody wants their wedding day to be perfect, perfect, perfect," says Sidney Yoblick, a Philadelphia videographer. "It won't be. We make it perfect."

Jenny Lehman, a videographer from Fort Washington, Md., has acquired a high-profile clientele.

Lehman says she would never dream of shoving a camera in a guest's face or pepper her work with flying Virgin Marys and other gaudy effects.

But, like her less-restrained colleagues, Lehman appreciates the value of fantasy.

Often, she says, wedding videos, no matter how classy and factual, reflect a woman's lingering adolescent dreams, which may have nothing to do with her reality. For that reason, Lehman edits out funny but off-color toasts or a tipsy bride's silly behavior.

When a bride worries about her extra chin or unruly coif, Lehman tells her, "Trust me, I'm going to make you look good." And she does. Happily ever after.

Should this trend toward blurring fact and fantasy be considered dangerous, or at the least an insidious assault on "real" memories?

Probably not, says Michèle Citron, a professor of radio, television and film at Northwestern University and author of the newly published book, *Home Movies and Other Necessary Fictions*. While video in the digital age is infinitely more sophisticated than those shaky home movies stored in the attic, its purpose in this respect remains pretty much the same, she says.

"We all have those moments when we were asked to stand in front of the Statue of Liberty and wave at the camera," Citron says.

"There's always something very directed about them... home movies sat at this line between documentary and fiction. We're not objective observers of our lives in any way."

"Today's equivalent of the Statue of Liberty pose is a video narrative that reframes reality the way we want it to be remembered," Citron says.

(The Baltimore Sun)

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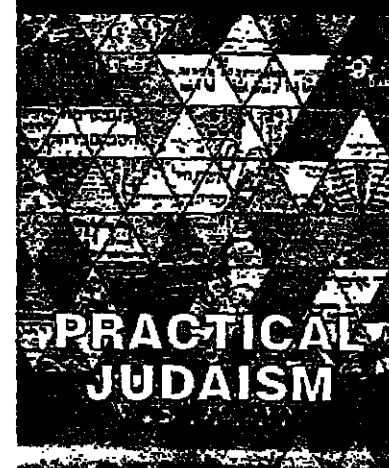
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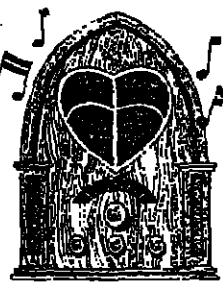
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The Stones still cast a giant shadow

In Tune



By David Brinn

This week, it's a battle royal of the '60s versus the '90s, as two venerable British rock institutions take on the cream of do-it-yourself independent American rock.

And the winner is... the listener! A live, in-concert disc from the

NO SECURITY
The Rolling Stones
(Helicon)

LIMITED EDITION COMPILATION
The Kinks
(NMC)

AMERICAN WATER
Silver Jews
(NMC)

FEATURING "BIRDS"
Quasi
(NMC)

Rolling Stones in 1999 may seem anachronistic, but the once-crowned "greatest rock 'n' roll band in the world" proves on *No Security* that it isn't ready for the scrap heap yet.

One problem the Stones face is that, with seven other live albums to their credit, their most institutionalized songs have already appeared once, twice or three times. On 1995's *Stripped*, their effective solution was to play it straight and close to the bone.

However, the band's *Bridges to Babylon* world tour, from which

No Security is culled, was a full-blown spectacle rehearsing the big hits and stressing material from the *Bridges* disc.

But instead of trotting out yet another version of "Brown Sugar," Jagger, Richards and Co. delve into their massive songbook and pull out vibrant versions of nuggets like "Memory Motel," "Waiting on a Friend," "Sister Morphine," and "The Last Time." The questionable inclusion of a half-dozen unremarkable songs from *Bridges to Babylon* is redeemed somewhat by the band's charged performance.

The core band of 50-somethings is enhanced by perennial sidemen Chuck Leavell and Bobby Keys, as well as guest appearances including Dave Matthews, Taj Mahal and saxophonist Joshua Redman. At this rate, the Stones will have no problem rolling straight into the 21st century.

GREAT news for fans of Ray Davies and the Kinks is that NMC, through Velvet Records, is releasing the band's eight records recorded in the 1970s.

That decade was a mixed bag for the band, as it saw its fan base dwindle, due to a increasingly complex labyrinth of concept albums and stage plays.

However, the first offering, 1971's *Muswell Hillbillies*, stands among the Kinks' most accomplished, plaintive works and the following year's sprawling *Everybody's in Showbiz* contains some vital Kinks Classics, amid the vaudevilian trappings.

Then the string of elaborate productions begins with *Preservation Act 1*, and continues for four albums through 1975's *Schoolboys in Disgrace*. Despite some wonderfully wistful Davies material, the albums unfortunately sound dated. But the decade ends on a high note as the band returns to three-minute rock songs on 1976's *Sleepwalker* and 1978's *Misfits*.

NMC has released two limited-edition samplers offering two tracks from each disc for the uninitiated. It's well worth taking the plunge.

SO MUCH for ancient history. Those who insist there's nothing like that old-time rock 'n' roll would do well to check out some of the bands signed to British independent label Domino, which is distributed here by NMC. Ironically, two of the strongest releases are by American acts the Silver Jews and Quasi.

Silver Jews features Steve Malkmus, the guitarist of America's highest-profile underground band Pavement, who collaborates with eccentric lyricist/singer David Berman to create a earthy electric folk music that's almost impossible to categorize.

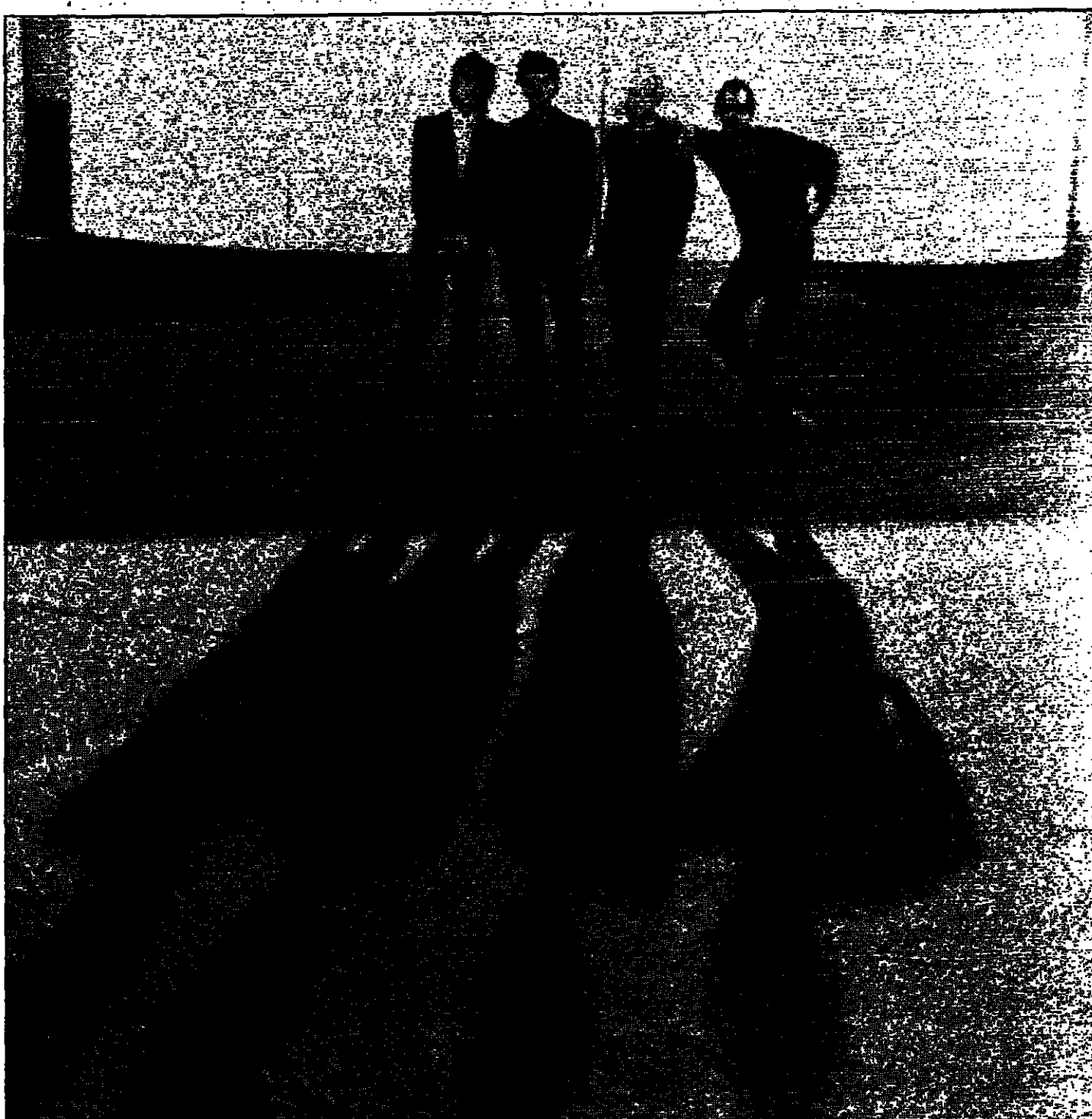
Berman's laconic talky/singy style and the band's pared-down sparse sound resembles Lou Reed's more sentimental work in the Velvet Underground.

Like Malkmus's work with Pavement, there's a gentle, mysterious quality to the fractured country and rock tunes — like you were eavesdropping on a living-room jam session of some New York CBGBers playing acoustic instruments.

One critic described the Jews' fascinating parables on their third disc *American Water* as trying to reconcile the struggle between the mythic and the everyday. It's something they have in common with Neil Young, Bruce Springsteen and any other artist who performs as if something's at stake.

Containing moments of beauty, poignancy and weirdness, *American Water* is an understated masterpiece.

QUASI's *Featuring Birds* is no masterpiece, but it sure is a lot of fun. The male-female duo out of



'Jagger, Richards and Co... will have no problem rolling into the 21st century.'

Portland, Oregon, features Sam Coomes on a rotochord keyboard with bandmate Janet Weiss on drums. It may sound minimalist, but the joyous noise these two create sounds fuller than most bands

and is twice as lively.

Sixteen pop songs that rock your socks off, sparked by Weiss's ferocious work behind the kit, zoom by in a mad rush, leaving hooks that linger on the brain.

Quasi's homemade wall of sound, built on Coomes's emulation of countless instruments, and its quirky arrangements, are a refreshing anomaly that sounds unlike anything else out there. If it

sounds like two people holed up in their home studio searching and finding their pop muse, it's because that's exactly what they did. Part bubblegum, part baroque and 100% endearing.

Cyberspace and cloning come to dance

DANCE ROUNDUP

By OVA SHAPIRO

British choreographer Wayne McGregor opens *The Millennium* with a glistering ring of blue light on the

Random Dance Company
'The Millennium'
Suzanne Dellal
January 8

stage floor. The light illuminates different segments of a male dancer's body as he moves laboriously within the ring to the "Techno" sound of Zoviet*France's music.

The first scene reveals all the elements of the work: strong visual graphics and pure, abstract movement that result in a glacial, somewhat mechanical impact.

Striving to decipher a computer-generated reality on the eve of the millennium, McGregor's work minimizes the human factor, discarding interchanges and relationships, and dealing with personal and communal space in terms of

net movement on a three-dimensional grid.

A group of young, dedicated dancers works hard to portray the futuristic world of digital bodies in cyberspace amidst a cacophony of impersonal, harsh and repetitious sound. The stage turns into a dark kaleidoscope of limbs that form a dynamic picture of a plotless existence in a cool and aloof environment.

The visual statement is intriguing, and reminiscent of that of the American dance creators of the '60s who strove for pure abstract dance. Unfortunately, the intellectual challenge and emotional adventures are limited.

This manifestation of current

'Cyber Queer Lounge'
Michele Pogliani Company
Suzanne Dellal
January 8

sub-culture concocted by Italian choreographer Michele Pogliani is quite unsettling. In his *Cyber Queer Lounge*, a stunning group of six dancers performs highly detailed movement that obviously relates to a different reality.

The program proclaims that Pogliani's source of inspiration

was an Internet homosexual chat line and notes that the progression of the work, like a voyage on the Net, moves from one link to the next. Somehow, this information is less important than it first appears to be — it only serves to limit our impressions and interpretations.

Far from the prevailing freestyle that leaves room for some degree for spontaneous expression on the part of the dancers, *Cyber Queer Lounge* is tightly choreographed from the toes up.

The accomplished dancers perform the same elaborate phrases simultaneously and with Prussian precision to the point that they evoke among the audience the strange sensation of watching cloning in progress. Defying gender and individuality, the dancers create unisex in their dress, their crude make-up and their short yellow-dyed hair. Often, they discretely change roles by interchanging positions on stage — misleading the audience as they toy with their identity.

Luckily, the work avoids being purely mechanical due to Pogliani's humor, the richness of the original musical score by Paolo Demitri, the intricate choreography and the dancers' worthy execution.

Gormezano in sensitive debut

By Ury Eppstein



Concert Roundup

Marietta Gormezano
Piano Recital
Works by Mozart, Brahms, Schumann and Erkin
Mevakesel Derech Hall, Jerusalem
January 16

sions. The pianist rendered it with intense involvement.

An unmistakable Middle Eastern flavor was recognizable in *Five Damlia* by Ulvi Cemal Erkin, a 20th-century Turkish composer. Its rhythms, intervals and distribution of energies and lyricism are reminiscent of Israeli music in the Fifties.

In works from the standard repertoire — Mozart's Sonata in A major and Brahms's Three Intermezzi op. 117 — Gormezano displayed sensitivity, delicate

nuances of dynamics, and convincingly placed emphatic accentuations. If given the proper opportunities, she can be expected to make a welcome contribution to the local chamber music scene.

Ysaye Quartet
Works by Haydn,
Beethoven, and Debussy
Jerusalem Music Center, Mishkenot Sha'ananim
January 13

Vivaciousness and freshness were attractive features of France's Ysaye Quartet in its concert that concluded a three-day string instruments workshop. They brushed the dust off the distorted image of an old-fashioned "Papa Haydn" and restored it to its original glamour, in their lively rendition of his "Sunrise" Quartet.

Debussy's Quartet was excitedly animated, in the spirit of its first movement, a quality it retained throughout the entire work. Decisiveness and rhythmicity were tempered with captivating subtlety.

The drama typical of Beethoven's *Storm and Drang* period, as well as of his personal stormy individualism, were forcefully expressed in his "Rasoumovsky" Quartet No. 3. Articulation was of that rare kind that allows tension to build up in the silence between phrases.

Each of the four instruments had its say clearly and distinctly, without becoming too domineering, and at the same time, achieved a fine balance with the others.

Eden will sing for Israel at Eurovision

By HELEN KAYE and AP

Moshe Datz's "Yom Huledet" ("Happy Birthday") will represent Israel at the 1999 Eurovision contest in May, which will be held in Jerusalem despite protests by some religious politicians.

The singers are Eden, a two-year-old male quartet that consists of two Israelis from Tel Aviv and two from the Black Hebrew community in Dimona. The Hebrew song uses "Happy Birthday" as an English refrain, and Eden producer Shlomo Zach said that the song wishes for a future without sadness or war, and is "a millennium wish to the world."

The song, chosen by a committee headed by attorney Adi Hadar, won out over 56 competitors and is described as pop with soul influences.

This is Datz's third Eurovision. He and his wife Orna (Datz and Datz) placed third in 1991 with Uzi Hitman's song "Here," and



The Eden Quartet: (Left to right) Rafael Dahan, Gabriel Butler, Doron Oron and Eddie Butler.

Datz's "Amen" was sung in Ireland by Liora in '95. Dana International's "Diva" won last year and so brought the rotating contest here. Accusing the

event of promoting moral decay, some religious Israeli politicians, such as Jerusalem deputy mayor Haim Miller, have tried to prevent the event from being held in the

Jewish state. However, the secular majority won out.

The contest will be held at the International Convention Center Binyanei Ha'uma on May 29.

The Devil said it in Hebrew

Theater Roundup



This fringe creation is performed by a group of gifted immigrant actors from the CIS, mostly in their twenties. This intrepid, imaginative and highly innovative production marks a daring attempt by these youngsters to come to grips with

its piety and religious ritual, its cantorial and klezmer music (Michael Gluzman) — is amazingly authentic, considering that it comes from artists previously estranged from Jewish traditions.

"Poor" theater as far as stage assets go, this group is rich in its ingenious use of a simple set and improvised props (Regina Shafir and Valeria Gluzman) comprised of multi-level scaffolding, an old trunk and the innards of an upright piano.

Their achievement stands out as a creditable and high-level example of determined integration into Israel's Hebrew culture.

Naomi Doudai

Hamantash ("The Leader")

Satirical cabaret by
Yankel Jacobson
Tzavta, Tel Aviv
January 12

Hashed Ha'aharon ("The Last Devil")
fantasy based on stories by Isaac Bashevis Singer
Malinski Theater
ZOA House, Tel Aviv
January 11

a hitherto evasive Jewish identity, as well as with the language, spirituality and mystique of their new homeland.

Daring too is the group's avant-garde treatment of characters in a *shetl* who are faced with the temptation of conversion to Christianity. Presented in esoteric (alas, at times obscure), terms, it is nonetheless a meta-physical masque with kabbalistic undercurrents.

The *shetl* atmosphere — with

spider, and Ben-Ze'ev equally risible as crooked election campaigner or fey First Lady.

Graduating from guffaws and irrepressible giggles to outright gales of laughter, they entertain with a wealth of catchy choruses (Eldad Lidor), comic costumes (Yehudit Greenspan) and dotty but delightful dance routines.

Overall, the slick timing and overall gaiety are products of Yisrael Gurion's excellent direction. A treat and a tonic in these trying times, this is a show that has to be seen. Naomi Doudai

Dos Gezang fun mein Hartz ("The Song from my Heart")
Yiddishpiel
Jerusalem Theater
January 11

As part of the 10th anniversary celebrations of the Yiddishpiel, Yankel Alperin, Dudu Fisher and Gadi Yagil have been touring the country with the Yiddish production *Dos Gezang fun mein Hartz*.

Audiences are lapping up the mix of nostalgia and updated slapstick. Reinterpretations of old skits made famous by the likes of Dzigal, Schumacher and Molly Picon still evoke belly laughs, but most hilarious of all are Gadi Yagil's impersonations of Arik Sharon and Rafael Eitan talking in what else — Yiddish.

The bulk of the show belongs to Dudu Fisher. It's really an opportunity for him to give yet another recital of the Yiddish songs he loves so much, while

Rami Baruch.

simultaneously demonstrating his talents as an actor. Alperin and Yagil merely provide comic relief so that Fisher can go and change his shirt.

The songs were all irresistibly familiar, but the audience was eager to hear Fisher's melodious renditions.

Sergei Berezin captured the *shetl* atmosphere on the set by using the windows of a wooden house as gates which opened into the living room which housed the musical ensemble, positioned to look like a family.

Although simultaneous-translation headphones were available, very few people made use of them — yet more proof that despite the many doomsday predictions of its demise, Yiddish is still alive and well.

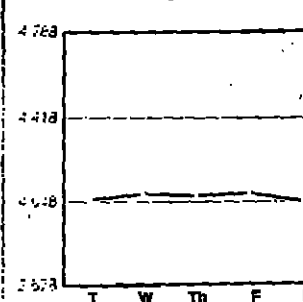
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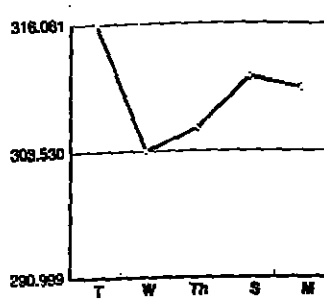
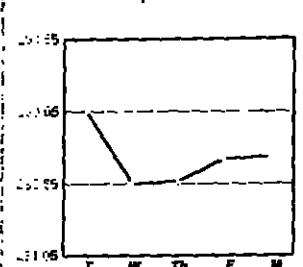
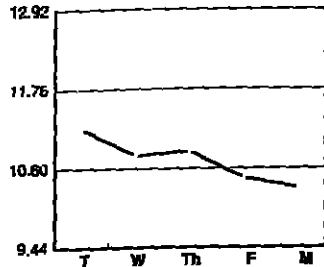
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in brief

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\$ per ounceOIL
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Israel asks to participate in EU R&D program

Industry and Trade Minister Natan Shtrasky yesterday asked Israel's European Union representatives to expedite Israel's participation in the Fifth Framework Program for technology and research and development in Europe. The Council of Ministers adopted the program in December, expecting the first round of proposals in mid-February, said the ministry. However, the signing of the final agreement between Israel and the EU, allowing Israel to participate in the program has been frozen due to peace process issues.

Shtrasky told the various EU ambassadors that linking technological cooperation to a political agenda is "doomed to failure," and could have a negative influence on the Israeli-European relationship.

Jessica Steinberg

Uzbek-Israeli economic cooperation approved

The government recently approved the economic cooperation agreement signed between Israel and Uzbekistan last September by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Uzbekistan's President Islam Karimov, said the Industry and Trade Ministry yesterday.

The government also approved \$70 million in risk insurance for Israeli companies exporting to Uzbekistan.

Exports to Uzbekistan totaled \$10 million in 1998, although the ministry anticipates higher exports in the long term.

Jessica Steinberg

U.S. buys Tadiran's video compression equipment

Tadiran Scopus announced yesterday that it has signed a \$1 million deal to supply the IDF with digital video compression equipment, after the system passed combat condition tests.

The video compression equipment is considered a very secure way of transmitting high resolution images and landing the deal was considered a major breakthrough by Tadiran Scopus that could open new windows of opportunity in the security sector for the company, officials said.

The deal also includes sale of special remote control components and an automatic control system, said David Mahlab, President of Tadiran Scopus.

Arieh O'Sullivan

Israeli start-up wins US Army contract

Radiote Wireless Communication, a Givat Shmuel based company, won a one year contract to provide the US Army Communications-Electronics Command (CECOM) with wireless integrated services digital network, the company yesterday said. CECOM is engaged in locating approaches for the military use of commercial technologies. Under the agreement CECOM would grant \$400,000 of the \$1 million investment in the new product, Radiote, which employs 21 workers, is owned by Clal Venture Capital Fund, US holding company Micel Corp, High Blue Radio and Cosmor Group.

Dan Gerstenfeld

100 start-ups join Manufacturers Association

About 100 start-up companies are joining the Manufacturers Association and Export Institute, according to Yoram Bilzofsky, director-general of the association. According to the association's figures, most of the companies are involved in high-tech, with 40% in software production, 25% in telecommunications, 14% involved in manufacturing medical equipment, 10% in electronics, 8% in Internet technology, 7% in biotechnology and 5% in multimedia. There are between 2,000 and 3,000 start-up companies in Israel, and start-up exports are expected to reach \$1 billion by 2001, said the association's spokesperson.

Jessica Steinberg

Siemens to double purchases in Israel

By NICKY BLACKBURN

European giant Siemens AG could double its purchases in the Israeli economy to some 200 million marks (NIS 480m.) over the next few years, Theo Kowalski, business unit president of Siemens Procurement and Logistic services announced yesterday.

Kowalski, who is in Israel with a delegation of purchasing executives from Siemens, said that the opening of Siemens International Procurement Office (IPO) in the country three months ago has opened the way to significant increases in Israeli exports to Siemens and its associates.

Speaking at a lunch meeting in Tel Aviv attended by members of the Industrial Cooperation Authority, the Israel Export Institute and the Manufacturer's Association, Kowalski said that Siemens has increased its purchases in Israel from 53m. marks in 1997 to about 100m. marks in 1998.

Some 70 Israeli manufacturers are now exporting to Siemens, Kowalski, who told officials

that he was impressed by the high quality of some local industry segments, said that Siemens has vast purchasing needs. "We use our procurement abilities to professionally serve smaller companies who can benefit from our knowledge and contacts in the country. At the same time Israeli companies find in the IPO a supporting agent for their marketing efforts."

Herman J. Koelle, managing director of Siemens Israel said that the company is pleased with the progress achieved by the IPO — one of only six around the world — in the first three months.

"Siemens has a strong interest in Israeli industry and in the Israeli economy," he said. "We are investing and cooperating in the Israeli start-up industry as part of our global R&D strategy, and at the same time wish to increase our involvement in building up Israeli infrastructure in areas like transport, energy, communications, health care and as partner of the Israeli industry. Procurements and buy-backs are a natural part of the process."

Foreign investment down 42%

By DAN GERSTENFELD

Overall foreign investment fell by 42.2 percent in 1998 to \$2 billion from \$3.46b. the previous year, according to figures published yesterday by the Bank of Israel.

The central bank attributed the decrease to a sharp reduction in financial investments, including investments in stocks of Israeli companies traded on the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange and on overseas markets.

In addition local companies raised only \$276m. by offering equity abroad compared with

\$1.06b. in 1997. Moreover, overseas investors sold shares on the TASE for a total of some \$300 million between August and October as they needed capital to finance losses in other emerging markets.

At the same time, real investments remained almost unchanged at \$1.5b.

The bank noted the overseas investors financed some 25% of their activities here by taking shekel-linked credit and by withdrawing money from shekel deposits, compared with only 5% in 1997.

The figures show that overall

capital inflow dropped in 1998 by 79.1% percent to \$1.4b. compared with an average of some \$6.7b. during the previous three years.

The report shows that while the local economy witnessed a capital inflow of \$2.5b. during the January-August period, from September a capital outflow of \$1.2b. was recorded.

The bank attributed the turnaround to a sharp decrease in the use of foreign currency-linked credit following the depreciation of the shekel. The figures were also affected by the fact that Israeli investors increased their holdings in foreign currency

deposits while foreign investors sold stocks in the wake of the global financial crises.

The bank added that capital outflow on behalf of Israeli citizens amounted to \$96b. this year, compared with capital inflow of \$4b. in the previous year.

The report shows that while Israel imported some \$1.6b. in the first eight months of the year, capital exports amounted to \$1.7b. in the September-December period.

The turnaround occurred following the emerging of the Russian financial crises in August and following the decision of the central

bank to lower interest rates, which in turn lowered the difference between interest rates here and abroad.

Overall, Israelis borrowed \$1.5b. in foreign currency last year compared to \$3.3b. in 1997. The bank said that the introduction of the foreign currency reform last May did not lead to a sharp increase in investments by Israeli individuals abroad.

Capital inflows on behalf of overseas investors also declined sharply to \$1.5b. compared with \$3.3b. in 1997 and an average of \$2.8b. in the previous three years.

Treasury's Milgrom: Coalition could ruin '99 budget

By JESSICA STEINBERG

Coalition allotments could disrupt the entire 1999 state budget framework, Treasury budget director David Milgrom said yesterday in a statement.

The government has already passed the budget bill on first reading, said Milgrom, and coalition allotments could "disrupt budget prioritizing, and it's totally unjustified." According to recent reports, coalition parties are attempting to squeeze an additional NIS 3 billion to NIS 5b. out of the NIS 173.8 b. 1999 budget. In August, the cabinet approved the Treasury-proposed budget, accompanied by a budget deficit target set at 2% of gross domestic product or NIS 7.8b.

"The 1999 budget will have to include a number of unplanned costs," said Milgrom, if coalition requests are granted.

For now, the government is operating according to last year's budget, with the Treasury distributing monthly allowances of up to one-twelfth of the previous year's total expenditures, adjusted for the current consumer price index.

Former Treasury director-general Ezra Sadan said he couldn't remember when the government last faced this situation.

Operating according to last year's budget is good for defeating inflation, but it's bad for economic growth, said Sadan. "It doesn't allow for developmental expenses."

Last year's budget shouldn't take the place of a 1999 budget, Treasury Director-General Ben-Zion Zilberfarb said at a jurists' conference in Eilat.

The Knesset needs to pass the budgetary arrangements bill and budget as soon as possible, he said.

The 47-clause arrangements bill was due to be passed in the Finance Committee on Sunday, with voting taking place in the Knesset on Thursday, but negotiations broke down between coalition and opposition MKs.

Committee chairman Avraham Ravitz said he expects to resume negotiations tomorrow, "if all goes according to order."

At the same time, the arrangements bill "shouldn't be passed at any price," Zilberfarb added.

He said coalition requests could damage the budget target, in which case he would suggest to Acting Finance Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to consider operating according to the 1998 budget for the next six months.

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RIN	0.55		
A	1.86		

It's the 'real' thing
Tourists in Rio de Janeiro check exchange rates for the local currency, the real, yesterday. Brazil began letting the real float last week.

'Y2K spells disaster for small companies'

By NICKY BLACKBURN

The majority of Israel's 80,000 small businesses will see their computer systems crash in January next year, because they are not prepared for the 2000 bug.

Jimmy Schwarzkopf, director of the Meta Group Israel consultancy firm, warned yesterday.

Schwarzkopf, who is chairing a two-day conference on information technology held by the Meta

Group in Tel Aviv, said that most Israeli companies with fewer than 99 employees are leaving it far too late to install systems that will prevent problems occurring at the end of the century.

"Israel's small companies are not doing anything to try to solve the millennium bug," he said.

"They are going to run into terrible trouble."

The Y2K, or millennium bug, is a programming flaw of many

computers whereby they only register years by the last two digits. Experts fear that unless computer systems are reprogrammed, computer systems everywhere will fail when 1999 becomes 2000, because these computers will interpret the date as the year 1900.

As a result of Y2K, Schwarzkopf believes the year ahead will be a bumpy one for the computer industry. He predicted that sales will fall dramatically in the last quarter of the year, as customers wait for the turn of the century to buy new equipment.

"In the last few months of 1999, companies will stop buying and installing equipment until after December 31. This will have a negative impact on the computer industry, creating a temporary recession with higher unemployment," he warned.

Israel-Australia trade to reach \$500m. by 2000

By NICKY BLACKBURN

Trade between Israel and Australia and New Zealand will rise to half a billion dollars by 2000, according to the Israel-Australia, New Zealand, and Oceania Chamber of Commerce (IACC).

The forecast, by Gurion Meltzer, chairman of the IACC, comes a few weeks before a trade mission by 25

Israeli businessmen to the region.

Participants, who fly to Sydney on February 14, include leading management from companies such as Elisra, Zag, Tadiran Communications, Breezecom, and the Jerusalem College of Technology.

Meltzer said that Australia, which has a GNP of \$368 billion, offers Israeli companies a rich

potential market.

"The Australian market conceals vast potential for Israeli entrepreneurs and companies in the fields of high-tech, agriculture and irrigation, media and communications, medicine, electronics, industry, consumer goods etc.," he said.

"It is crying out for high-tech firms that have completed their development phase. Israel is con-

sidered a high-tech giant in Australia."

According to data provided by the World Bank, trade in the Asia-Pacific region in the year 2000 will be about 55 percent of all world trade.

Last year Israeli exports to Australia stood at about \$250 million, while imports reached some \$100 million.

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Building Blocks

By JESSICA STEINBERG

Jerusalem (residential)
A five-room, 140-sq.-m. apartment with an 81-sq.-m. terrace was sold for \$205,000.
A four-room apartment was sold in Beit Hakerem on Rehov Samir for \$248,000.
On Rehov Ben Zuri in Armon Hanatzah, a four-room apartment was sold for \$215,000.
In Kiryat Shalom, a three-room, ground-floor apartment on Rehov Nili was sold for \$125,000.
A two-and-a-half-room apartment on Rehov Shalom was sold for \$147,000.
Two three-room apartments on Rehov Ben Zuri in Kiryat Shalom were sold for \$142,000 and \$148,000.

Asdod (commercial)
A construction company Solel Boneh's subsidiary of Housing and Construction Co. is bidding on a 25,000-sq.-m., 25-floor commercial center in Asdod for \$26.3 million. The building will include 18 office floors, 3 shopping floors and 3 floors of parking.
Average, averaging about \$12 to \$18 per meter.

Why Brazil matters more than Asia

By MAGGIE MAHAR

Last week, Brazil's central bank threw in the towel, and let the real begin to float freely. No one knows how much Brazil's currency will be worth at the end of the day. Nevertheless, analysts on the sunny sell-side of the Street are offering a string of reasons why we shouldn't be too worried: "Brazil isn't Asia," "Brazil isn't Russia," "Brazil's economy is the size of California's." "Brazil buys just 2.3 percent of US exports." Maybe the market's reaction was overdue. After all, everyone expected trouble in Brazil - even the bankers.

And the bankers are always the last to know: consider how long it took them to notice that Donald Trump was blowing bubbles. But when Russia defaulted, they wised up. "According to a recent report from the Federal Reserve, US banks reduced their exposure to Brazil, Argentina and Mexico from \$45 billion to just \$39b," observes David Orr, chief capital markets economist at First Union Corp. Wait a minute: Just \$39b? "Exactly," says Orr. "It's a lot of money." He puts the debt in perspective: "When Asia collapsed, the banks' exposure was \$25b. When Russia fell, US banks had about \$5b. at risk. This time, it's \$39b." And that's just in Brazil, Argentina and Mexico. According to the Bank for International Settlements, at the end of June, US banks had a total of \$64.2b. on the line in Latin America, with Brazilian debt accounting for \$16.8b.

And although the devaluation was expected, the timing wasn't. "We think that the timing heightens some of the risks for Brazil," Gallagher observed. The goal of the devaluation was to lower interest rates, "but," she warned, "we think high interest rates are at least as necessary under the new policy." The greatest threat is that Brazil will tip all of Latin America into a recession. "This is why Brazil is a much bigger deal than Thailand," says David Orr, chief capital markets economist at First Union Corp. "If the region slides into a serious recession, it could have a \$40b. impact on the US." Unfortunately, Orr thinks there's a "50-50 chance" that this could happen. Brazil could have the same effect on Latin America that Southeast Asia had on Japan: With the real worth less, Brazilians won't be able to afford to buy as many goods from their neighbors. Meanwhile, Brazil's exports will be cheaper, providing competition for rivals in Argentina or Chile.

And economies in Latin America were already slowing. "Even before the devaluation, we expected negative growth in Brazil, and at best, we think Argentina's economy will remain flat," observes Tulio Vera, head of emerging-markets research at ABN Amro. "If the situation in Brazil deteriorates, we'll see negative growth in Argentina." Falling commodity prices have already hurt Chile and Venezuela. As for Mexico, "Before the devaluation, we expected growth of only 2 to 3% - down from last year's 4 to 5%," says Vera. "Now, Mexico's fundamentals make it vulnerable to what's happening in Brazil." In November, Mexico's trade deficit widened to \$879 million, its biggest shortfall since the peso crashed in December 1994. "And if you look at Mexico's trade deficit, you understand the gist of the whole problem in Latin America," Vera continues. "Latin America was already facing a difficult situation in terms of capital flows. Now, countries like Mexico that are running a current account deficit will have to adjust by slowing their economies, which means raising interest rates, reducing domestic demand, limiting liquidity and reducing imports."

IF Latin America tries to stem capital outflows by putting a brake on imports, the US will suffer most. Granted, Brazil buys only 2.3% of US exports - but Latin America accounts for fully one-fifth of our market. In fact, Latin America is the only major region in the world where the US sells more than it buys. And at a time when the US is running a record trade deficit, exporters can't afford to lose many more customers. A recession in Latin America could cost the US economy as much as \$40b. because Latin America is an important market for automakers, and for companies ranging from Coca-Cola and Colgate-Palmolive, to Xerox, Dow Chemical Co. and Caterpillar Inc. Boeing and Airbus Industrie also could lose business. Finally, consider Brazil's place in the world's financial markets. "Brazil comprises 33.3% of the IFC emerging-market benchmark for equities," Vera notes, "and about one-fifth of the index for emerging-market debt. To put that in perspective, all of Asia makes up just 3% of emerging-market debt. Before it defaulted, Russia accounted for only 15%." No, Brazil isn't Asia or Russia or even California. In some ways, it's more important. (Bloomberg)

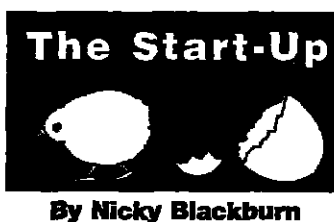
Beware: Your employer may be watching you

Yokne'am-based AbirNet has developed a network security system capable of monitoring every move you make at the computer

It doesn't matter what Ziv Dascalu, CTO and general manager of AbirNet, says - his product is every employee's nightmare. Using AbirNet's innovative technology, managements can scan each word their employees write, every e-mail they send and every website they surf. As if this isn't Orwellian enough, the software program also enables management to catalog the misdeeds for court and even, if the need arises, to create a personal profile of each employee. Needless to say, there are many employers who find this an interesting concept. Since the Yokne'am-based start-up was founded in October 1996, sales have already reached several million dollars a year (Dascalu won't reveal details), some 25,000 users are testing the system, and the company has grown in size from an original 10 people to about 40, of whom 15 are in the company's sales and marketing division in Dallas. Once owned by Dascalu, 30, and two other founding members, AbirNet raised \$2.8 million in a private placement in February 1997 by Gemini, Walden, Forval and Check Point Software Technologies, and was bought for \$27m. in June 1998 by Memco Software. The recent purchase of Memco by US company Platinum Technology means AbirNet is now effectively owned by the software giant.

while Dascalu was working as manager of the communications development group at US company NetManage. "We discovered that 85 percent of all intrusions come from the inside, so the firewall system, which is a barrier between an internal and external network, does not fulfill all the security needs. We experienced this kind of problem again and again with our customers and understood that there was a need for a device that could protect the network internally without messing around too much with the system." With a clear picture in mind of the product, and what the market wanted, it took just six months for the company to complete beta testing in the US and in Israel, and to release it onto the market. It won instant acclaim, receiving numerous awards from high-tech magazines. Basically SessionWall allows management to unobtrusively monitor all programs that are running on every computer in the network. If the system detects an abnormality, it can instantly block the action, stopping the employee in mid-sentence or mid-procedure. It reports the activity, and logs and records all information providing the company with a detailed log which can be used in court if, as Dascalu hints, "you need to justify certain actions against the person." "Our main role is to take the work out of network protection," says Dascalu. ONE of the company's first aims was to make the system easy to use, and it appears to have accomplished this. The product, which

costs between \$1,500 and \$20,000 depending on the number of users, can be installed in just a few minutes, and needs to be on only one server, avoiding all the expense and fuss of tampering with every machine on the network. Once set up, the product can, in less than 15 minutes, give users a clear picture of everything that is happening. The system has four main roles: security, network usage reporting, company preservation and policy monitoring. 1. Security: If, for example, someone tries to break in to a server by trying out password after password, the system detects the attempt immediately and shuts down the activity, reporting it to the appropriate authority. 2. Network usage reporting: Network administrators are often unaware of what protocols and programs are running on the network and don't know how people are spending their time or using the company's bandwidth. Dascalu gives the example of an Israeli company manager who turned to AbirNet because he couldn't understand why his system was running so slowly. "Something was taking up the bandwidth intensively, but they had no idea what," says Dascalu. The company installed SessionWall and discovered that one of its employees was listening to a San Francisco radio station over the Internet. "This took up a great deal of bandwidth, and the company was having to discover it through any other tool," says Dascalu. 3. Company preservation:



By Nicky Blackburn

Dascalu also calls this litigation avoidance. Using SessionWall, brokerage houses and other financial institutions can monitor what their employees are writing on e-mails or correspondence and make sure that false promises for which the company can be sued, are never made. A company can establish policies, for e-mail, for example, that prohibit the use of words such as "guarantee" or "promise" in business correspondence. 4. Usage policy monitoring: Many companies have certain policies they want to enforce and maintain, and SessionWall, according to Dascalu, is the perfect tool. If, for example, the company has a policy against sexual harassment, the product can detect and block any sexually related content, and alert the employer to a violation. That can include blocking sex and gambling websites. The same technology can also be used to prevent you from sending out your resume from a work computer. Dascalu believes SessionWall appeals to a long list of customers, and an impressive collection are already trying out the product - auditors such as PricewaterhouseCoopers and Ernst and Young; security educators like US company NetAccess; major US banks; telecommunication companies;

manufacturers such as Marcom, Philips and Olivetti; retailers like Nabisco; schools; Internet service providers; military and government sectors; and small businesses that are overwhelmed by their security needs. THE company has gone for a three-pronged marketing approach. Firstly, SessionWall is available on a 30-day trial basis and can be downloaded from the Internet. Dascalu believes this is an extremely effective method of targeting potential customers. "In this business, there is no one-shot solution. It's an ongoing process, and we believe we must give people the ability to experience this product and understand its powers." The 25,000 companies now trying out the product were nearly all recruited through this offer. Secondly, AbirNet has hired a range of distributors and salespeople all over the world, from Europe to the Far East, Africa, China and Australia. The last method is distribution through system integrators and consultants. A major boost to AbirNet's marketing efforts is undoubtedly its recent sale to Tel Aviv-based Memco, a world leader in computer security, and its connection with Platinum. "We had been looking for a strategic partner for some time so that we could push our product more and more into the market, and Memco as a company offers a complimentary service and is very well established in corporate America. This gave us a way to penetrate the market, mak-

ing it much easier for us to sell our products to large customers. It was a good move and has had a good influence on our business." The recent sale of Memco to Platinum, which should be finalized next month, could be even more beneficial for AbirNet. Platinum, which is based in Illinois, is the seventh largest independent software vendor in the world. Revenues for 1997 were \$739m., and it employs 6,000 people in 40 or so offices around the world. "Our product will get quite a boost by their massive sales and marketing force," predicts Dascalu. "Platinum is very experienced at integrating companies into its platform, and we see this as an opportunity. It will be beneficial for our company to work with Platinum because if we want to grow and to put our product on every network on the planet then we need a big marketing and sales force behind us." He has no fears that his technology might be transferred away from Israel. "We have lots of talent and skills by having a development branch in Israel, and this is beneficial to Platinum," he says. At present, says Dascalu, AbirNet has no direct competition. "We are working in a variety of areas in network protection, and there is no other company doing this. We have competitors in specific segments, but no direct competitors." Dascalu is aware that this picture is likely to change at some point with an increasing number of new products evolving in the same direction as SessionWall, but he believes the technology created by AbirNet will not be easy to replicate.

IN the meantime, the company continues to listen carefully to the needs and comments of its customers. "We are trying to fine-tune it to match customer needs," says Dascalu. "We are very market driven." Dascalu has great plans for the future. "Our aim is to be on each and every network on the planet. We are going to be the first product that everyone puts on their network to validate the network security." All very well, but what about the poor employee? "There's no need to monitor everything," counters Dascalu. "The issue is that employees are using company equipment, and companies need to know what they are doing. You wouldn't use the company phone to call your brother long-distance in the States, so why should you misuse the computer?" "We let companies implement their policies, and it depends on them how far they want to go. Every protection product has an element of Big Brother about it. We see companies that are afraid of people misusing their system, afraid of loss of productivity and afraid of people getting access to data they shouldn't have. They are blind and our product gives them the glasses to see what's happening. Companies want to protect themselves and need to know what's going on with the network." "We aren't trying to punish the good guys," he adds. Whether or not this is the aim, it's clear that many employees will find a system such as this highly daunting. No one likes to feel they are being watched.

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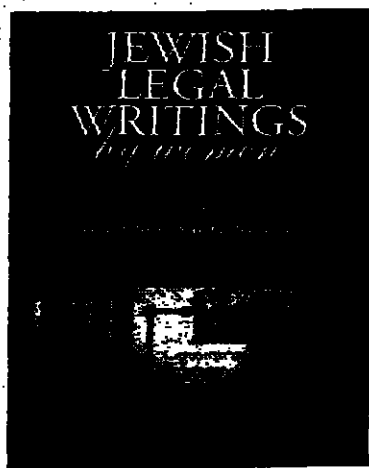
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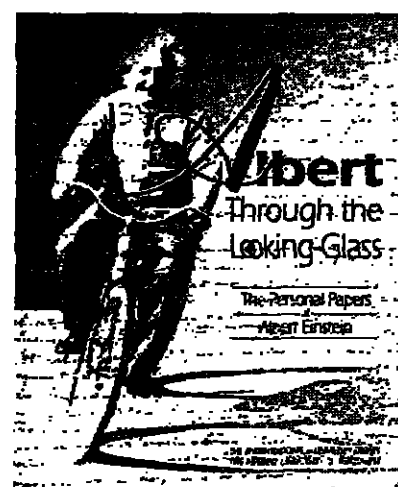
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TASE drops led by Bezeq, Dead Sea Works

Tel Aviv

Israeli stocks fell yesterday, led by Bezeq, after a second company said it will compete in the market for local telephone services after the government abolishes Bezeq's monopoly later this year.

The Maof Index of the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange's 25 largest companies fell 0.33 percent to 309.69 after rising 1.58 percent on Sunday.

Bezeq fell 0.64 percent to NIS 14.00. The privately held Aurec Group said it plans to compete with Bezeq when the state-controlled company loses its monopoly over the local call market later this year, joining Eurocom, which earlier announced plan to offer local calls.

Dead Sea Works fell 1.53 percent to NIS 9. Volkswagen AG said it would withhold a \$25 million investment in a joint magnesium project with Dead Sea Works.

Osem Investment fell 1.38 percent to 17.14. Investors buying the shares yesterday won't receive the 33.9 agorot per share dividend it will pay February 1.

Europe

European stocks gained, with a string of mobile telecommunication companies rising to records as Vodafone Group Plc's takeover of AirTouch Communications Inc. fueled speculation of more acquisitions in the industry.

This is just "fuel on the fire," of merger speculation, said Tom Eyre, who helps manage 1.8 billion pounds (\$3 billion) for BWD Rensburg Ltd. in Leeds.

Banks rallied for a second day after two of Spain's three biggest

banks, Banco Santander SA and Banco Central Hispano SA, said they'd merge.

The Bloomberg Europe 500 index advanced for a third day, adding 3.64 points, or 1.8%, to 206.34 as gains outnumbered declines by a four-to-one ratio. All of the benchmark indexes in Europe's eight biggest stock markets rose.

The Bloomberg telecommunication services index, which represents 11 percent of the Europe 500, advanced 3.3%, taking its three-day rise to 8.4%. Vodafone led the index higher, leaping 154.5 pence to a record 1,223. The UK's No. 1 mobile phone company agreed to buy AirTouch for \$59.7 billion, creating the world's largest wireless phone company and the third biggest publicly traded U.K. company.

"This is great for Vodafone," said Markus Wissler, who helps manage about 2 billion Swiss francs (\$1.45 billion) at Coop Bank in Basel and whose Vodafone shares represent about 2% of his portfolio.

"No matter where you are you'll be able to use a Vodafone service," Cable & Wireless Plc, the No. 2 UK phone operator, Orange Plc, the UK's No. 3 mobile phone company, and TeleWest Communications Plc, the UK's No. 2 cable company, all reached record highs. Cable & Wireless rose 68p to 942, Orange added 103p to 1,031 and TeleWest advanced 19p to 259.9.

"Everyone wants telecoms - its where the growth is going to be in the next couple of years," said Eyre, who counts British Telecom Plc, the UK's biggest fixed line operator as one of his "core" holdings. BT rose 29.5 to 962.5.

MobilCom AG rose 28 euros to

a record 380 after Germany's No. 2 long-distance phone company said the number of its mobile-phone customers more than tripled last year, though the company declined to give earnings figures.

Nokia Oyj, the world's biggest maker of mobile phones, rose 4.01 euros to a record 120.3. Ericsson AB, the world's third-biggest portable phone maker, added 4.5 kronor to 195.5.

Deutsche Telekom AG, Europe's largest fixed line phone operator, advanced 1.4 euros to 33.99, while Mannesmann AG, the operator of Germany's second biggest phone network, rose 4.8 euros to 115.15.

Banco Santander and Banco Central Hispano, both of which were suspended Friday pending details of their merger plans released late Friday, led European banks higher.

The Bloomberg Banking and Financial Services Index, which represents about 16% of the Europe 500, rose 4.6 points to 182.73, taking its two-day advance to 5% on talk that other takeovers are imminent as financial services companies expand to better compete in Europe's single market.

Takeovers and acquisitions are "going to be the theme for 1999," said Jacques-Antoine Breuille, who manages \$700 million at International Capital Gestion in Paris and who bought French banks Credit Commercial de France SA, Societe Generale SA and Paribas SA.

CCF, France's fifth-biggest publicly traded bank, rose 5.8 euro to 77, while Societe Generale SA, France's biggest publicly traded bank, added 7.4 euros to 145.6. Paribas gained 4.2 euros to 82.9.

Santander advanced 2.19 euros to 16.83 while BCI, its smaller



Maof 309.69 ▼ 0.33%
FTSE 6123.98 ▲ 3.1%
Nikkei 13805.06 ▲ 0.48%

partner, added 1.36 euros to 10.47. They pledged Friday to boost earnings 25% a year through 2000 with their 10 billion euro merger (\$11.6 billion), forming the No. 2 bank by market capitalization in the euro zone.

Scania AB, Europe's fourth biggest truck maker, led auto stock gains for the second day. It rose 17 kronor to 227, adding to a 19.3% gain Friday. Today's advance came after the *Financial Times* reported Germany's Volkswagen AG and Renault SA may make offers to rival Volvo AB, which said Friday it bought a 13% stake in the Swedish truck maker for 5.2 billion kronor (\$662 million) and aims to buy the rest. Volkswagen wasn't available to comment. Renault declined to comment.

Renault rose 1.9 euros to 43.45. France's second biggest carmaker confirmed yesterday that it is in talks with a number of Asia companies, including Nissan Motor Co., Japan's second largest carmaker, as it seeks a "greater presence" in Asia.

DaimlerChrysler AG rose 1.15 euros to 91.1 after a separate press report that, DaimlerChrysler and

Ford Motor Co. may have bid for a stake in Nissan. Shares in Nissan Motor advanced as much as 5%. DaimlerChrysler said it would consider taking a stake in Nissan.

FSA Peugeot-Citroen, France's biggest carmaker, advanced 3.5 euros to 139.5, while Volkswagen, Germany's No. 1 carmaker, added 1.8 euros to 69.

General Electric Co., the UK's second-largest defense contractor, rose 18p to a record 587.5 after it said its Marconi defense unit is in "advanced discussions" with British Aerospace Plc, Europe's largest defense-equipment maker. BAe gained 4p to 522. GEC said last month it will separate its Marconi unit from the rest of the company to facilitate a merger of the unit with another company.

Asia

Japanese stocks rose for a third day after a jump in US stocks eased concern Brazil's financial crisis would weigh on the US economy, the largest market for exporters such as Toyota Motor Corp.

The key Nikkei 225 average rose 66.20, or 0.5%, to 13,805.06. Toyota and Sony Corp. led the way on optimism uninterrupted economic growth in the US would bolster their earnings.

"The strength we saw on Wall Street before the weekend put the Brazil crisis on the back burner," said Tomohiko Yohena, deputy manager at Izumi Securities Co.

In other markets, Singapore's Straits Times Index rose 3.2% as lower interest rates raised expectations that the island state will be able to recover from its recession in the second half of the year.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng Index

rose 2.5% as investors brushed off concerns a fall in Brazil's real would hurt emerging markets. South Korea's Kospi index rose 1.3% on expectations the country's credit rating will be lifted to investment grade, helping reduce borrowing costs.

On Friday, the benchmark Dow Jones Industrial Average in the US rebounded 2.4% and the technology-heavy Nasdaq Composite Index rose 3.1% to 2348 after Brazil floated the real, assuaging concern the country would deplete its foreign currency reserves trying to defend the currency. The US does about a fifth of its trade with Brazil.

Sony, Japan's No. 2 consumer electronics company, which relies on the US for a third of its sales, rose 3.0% to 7,880 yen. Toyota, the country's top automaker, which depends on US sales for half its operating profit, jumped 5.6% to 2,850 yen. Among other US-oriented exporters, Canon Inc. added 6.5% to 2,545 and Bridgestone Corp. advanced 4.9 percent to 2,550 yen.

Nissan Motor Co. rose 4.8% to 416 yen, following an unattributed report by the Nihon Keizai newspaper that France's Renault SA has proposed a "comprehensive alliance" that would include taking a 20% stake in Japan's second largest automaker. A Nissan spokesman said the company had received no such offer from Renault but would "seriously consider" one.

Singapore's Straits Times Index rose 47.29 points to 1547.10, led by banks and real estate developers, as lower borrowing costs pointed to improved earnings prospects in the second half.

Singapore's biggest banks have cut their best lending rates by as

much as 2.5 percentage points in the past four months, helping to spur spending in the island state.

"There's still some optimism that a recovery will take place in the second half of the year for Singapore," said the market should hold up," said Michael Lim, regional director at Prudential Portfolio Managers (Asia) Ltd. in Singapore, which manages \$3.5 billion.

Banks and real estate developers are among Singapore's biggest companies. More than half of the island state's biggest companies have real estate investments.

City Developments Ltd., the biggest real estate developer on the exchange, and Singapore's two biggest banks, Development Bank of Singapore Ltd. and Oversea-Chinese Banking Corp., led the gains, accounting for a quarter of the index's advance.

City Developments rose 2.7% to \$37.70. DBS Ltd., the second-biggest publicly traded developer, rose 1.9% to \$52.64. Oversea-Chinese Banking's foreign shares rose 8.0% to \$513.50. Development Bank's foreign shares rose 9.5% to \$15.00. While all investors can buy foreign shares, only Singaporeans can invest in local shares.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng Index rose 255.14 to 10,402.54, as investors brushed off concern that the impact of Brazil's decision to allow its currency to float will spread to emerging markets.

"The effect from the Brazil scenario is going to be short-term," said Adrian Fu, investment analyst at Investec Guinness Flight Asia Ltd., which manages about \$500 million in the region excluding Japan. "Local interest rates haven't shot up that much, and they will come down." (Bloomberg)

Shekel gains as concern eases over Brazil devaluation

The shekel rose against the dollar as concern eased that a currency crisis in Brazil will spark crises in emerging markets around the world, including Israel.

The shekel rose to 4.0485 on Friday, the last day the shekel traded.

Investors were optimistic Brazil's actions will revive its economy and prevent a meltdown in emerging markets.

"There's relief about the performance in Brazil," said Chaim Fromowitz, head of trading at Bank Leumi. "There was demand for the shekel, primarily in the interbank market." The gaining shekel has also damped inflation fears. The Israeli currency has rebounded from its all-time low of 4.367 to the dollar on October 22. The shekel recovered as the central bank in November raised

its benchmark lending rate to a 17-month high of 13.5 percent.

The shekel was the fourth-best performing currency out of 58 currencies surveyed by Bloomberg from December 31 through January 15. The shekel rose close to 3% during that period.

Meanwhile, the dollar rose to a three-week high against the yen and was little changed against the euro on hopes Brazil's decision to let its currency trade freely will bolster the recovery of Latin America's largest economy.

Brazil said on Sunday it will allow the real to float, after it stopped defending the currency's value Friday. The US does about a fifth of its trade with Latin American countries, whose economies could be boosted as Brazil lowers the high interest

rates it has used to bolster its currency.

"The dollar's going to continue in a strong vein" in coming days, said Keith Edmunds, the chief currency analyst at IBJ International. "The sentiment on Brazil is still relatively positive." The US currency rose as high as 115.32 yen from 114.05 late Friday, in London. That's its strongest since reaching 115.89 yen on December 30. It was at 114.49. It was little changed against the euro at \$1.1582 per euro from \$1.1590, holding gains of almost 1 percent made Friday. The US market was closed yesterday for Martin Luther King Day.

Brazil's central bank said it "will let the market determine the foreign exchange rate" of the real, though it may limit swings in its value by buying or selling currencies.

CURRENCIES	
Dollar	4.0485 ▼ 0.01%
British	4.4264 ▼ 1.22%
Euro	4.6955 ▼ 1.78%
Sterling	6.7025 ▼ 1.09%

"There's a very good chance the dollar's rebound will be extended," said Rob Minikin, a currency analyst at Citibank.

Brazil's decision is "a step

towards normalcy and should be seen as encouraging," Brazil's Bovespa stock index Friday surged 33 percent on expectations lower interest rates will fuel growth, helping to push up stocks throughout Latin America. In the US, the Dow Jones Industrial Average gained 2.4 percent.

Still, some investors remain skeptical. Brazil's sliding currency could put pressure on other Latin American countries to let their currencies weaken in a bid to keep exports competitive. That reduces the purchasing power of the region, sapping demand for US goods.

The real weakened 2.7% to 1.47 to the dollar after reports in Brazil that the International Monetary Fund rejected a Brazilian attempt to speed up payments from a \$41.5 billion aid package follow-

ing a weekend of emergency negotiations.

"The US has a substantial and growing trade deficit and the Latin American problem will only add to that," said Philip Williams, who helps oversee 1.5 billion pounds (\$2.5 billion) at Chiswell Associates. "Rationally, this is not a dollar problem."

We're shaping up for a big dollar problem further down the line," in Europe, a report showing German wholesale prices unexpectedly rose 0.4% in December, after falling for the previous seven months, did little to damp speculation the European Central Bank will reduce interest rates in the coming months amid signs European economies are slowing.

Expectations for lower borrowing costs are reflected in the interest rate futures market. The

implied yield on the June contract stands at 2.84%, low enough to suggest many traders and investors expect rates to fall by more than 20 basis points before June.

"I see the European Central Bank cutting interest rates," said Klaus Boehm, head of money and capital markets at BASF AG, Germany's largest drugs and chemical maker. "There's potential for the US dollar to strengthen because growth in the US will be stronger than in Europe." ECB policy-makers meet to discuss rates on Thursday. The benchmark rate now stands at 3.0%, compared to the Federal Reserve's 4.75%. Lower rates can hurt a currency since they undermine the return on deposits denominated in that currency. (Bloomberg)

Coffee falls as producers predict surplus

Brent crude oil for March delivery fell as much as 9 cents, or 0.8 percent, to \$10.70 a barrel on the International Petroleum Exchange in London, as traders wait to see whether oil producers will meet as early as next month to discuss trimming output in an effort to boost prices that are close to a 12-year low. The New York

Mercantile Exchange, where oil futures are traded in the US, was closed yesterday for Martin Luther King Day.

rate. Rising output from mines and falling demand from manufacturers combined to leave inventories rising by some 3,000 tons a day since August, sending prices to their lowest in almost 12 years. Though stockpile increases have virtually stopped since the beginning of the year, traders said shipments totaling up to 200,000 tons are expected to arrive in LME-registered warehouses in Europe and the US in coming weeks.

COMMODITIES	
Gold	\$287.25 ▲ 0.2
Crude Oil	\$10.60 ▼ 0.19

Coffee for March delivery fell as much as \$34, or 2.0 percent, to \$1,685 a metric ton on the London International Financial Futures and Options Exchange on expectations ample world supplies will more than offset demand. Green coffee inventories rose 140,000 bags to 1.41 million bags in December from a month ago, the New York based Green Coffee Association said Friday after trading closed.

Each bag weighs 60 kilograms. Farmers in Brazil, the world's biggest coffee producer, could boost exports to earn dollars after the government there allowed its currency to float freely.

A weaker currency means exporters can sell dollar-priced goods such as coffee, for less than competitors, with stronger national currencies.

Cocoa for March delivery fell as much as \$22, or 2.3 percent, to

\$897 a metric ton on the London International Financial Futures and Options Exchange, on expectations a weakening Brazilian currency will reduce chocolate imports by one of Latin America's biggest chocolate consumers. Brazil's currency, the real, has fallen almost 15 percent against the dollar since the government stopped its costly defense of the currency on January 13. (Bloomberg)

Renault confirms talks with Nissan

Renault SA, France's No. 2 carmaker, said it's in talks with Nissan Motor Co., Japan's second-largest carmaker, and other companies, to expand in the Asian region.

Renault said it was considering taking an equity stake in Nissan, which is also being courted by DaimlerChrysler AG. The move is part of Renault's push to expand its sales in Asia to 10 percent of total sales from 0.3 percent now.

The French carmaker is the latest to accelerate efforts to form alliances as companies seek acquisitions to cut costs and remove excess factory capacity. Ford Motor Co. and Italy's Fiat SpA have said they're interested in buying Volvo AB, Sweden's largest carmaker. General Motors Corp. said it may buy the 50% it doesn't own of Saab, a Swedish carmaker.

A linkup with Nissan would "transform Renault from a regional player into a worldwide one," said Patrice Solaro, an automobile industry analyst with Julius Baer brokerage in Paris. "Nissan is very active in both Asia and the US, while Renault's strengths lie in Europe and Latin America."

Renault shares soared 1.92 euros, or 4.62%, to 43.47 on the Paris Bourse. Nissan shares gained 19

yen, or 4.8%, to 416.

Nissan is negotiating to forge closer ties with three rivals, according to press reports, which named Renault, DaimlerChrysler AG and Ford Motor Co., and may announce a partner by the end of the month.

The Japanese company said two days ago it would "seriously consider" an offer by Renault to invest in it.

Nissan denied press reports that the French company had bid for 20% of it.

Renault Credit International, a unit of the French carmaker, yesterday sold 350 million euros (\$410 million) worth of bonds. The company didn't specify what it planned to do with the money raised.

Renault, fresh from a record sales year in 1998, is counting on growth overseas to help it double its annual vehicle sales to 4 million units by 2010. The carmaker has said it expects to triple its sales outside Western Europe over the next 11 years.

By 2010, Renault aims to sell about 10% of its cars in Asia, up from the 7,000 cars it sold in Malaysia, China, Japan and Taiwan last year. Asia accounted for just 0.3% of its 1998 sales of 2.15 million.

Regional Group makes \$1.5b. bid for Mirror

Candover Investment's Regional Independent Media Plc offered to buy Mirror Group Plc, the UK's No. 3 publisher, for £913 million in cash, Mirror said.

The indicated value of the bid from RIM, which publishes the *Yorkshire Post* and the *Lancashire Evening Post*, was 200 pence per ordinary share, a 15 percent premium over Mirror's Friday closing share price of 173.5p.

Mirror Group shares jumped 32p to 205.5p, above the indicated bid level, indicating investors expect a higher offer will be made.

Trinity shares fell 5p to 433p. RIM does not trade.

"I think 200p is too low and I think the market is expecting a counterbid from Trinity or another company," said Lorna Tibbani, an analyst with WestLB Panmure. "The right price is somewhere around 225p to actually get shareholders contemplating selling the company. A bid at 200p is trying to get the company on the cheap."

The RIM offer comes after Mirror's failed merger discussions with Trinity Plc, the UK's biggest

regional newspaper group. Phillips & Drew Fund Management, Mirror's biggest shareholder with almost 22 percent of its equity, has been pushing Mirror to restart talks, saying Mirror's shares are undervalued.

"At first glance, the offer appears to be more attractive to shareholders than the Trinity bid," said Nick Miles, a Mirror spokesman, referring to the RIM bid. "It's something the board will have to have a good look at. It shows there's more than one player out there other than just Trinity."

Trinity said the RIM bid would not immediately lead to a higher bid for Mirror. "Our position is very clear. We are not in talks and we shall wait to see how their major shareholders react to the news," a Trinity spokesman said.

UK press reports said Trinity's stock offer for Mirror came to about 165p per share.

Still some analysts said they expected Trinity to come back with a higher bid for Mirror. RIM executives did not return calls seeking comment.

Mirror said its board would meet to discuss the RIM bid and advised shareholders to take no action until further announcement was made.

"I think investors would be much happier with cash than with paper," said Angela Maxwell, an analyst with Sutherland Ltd.

Regional Independent Media was created last February when Candover Investments, a leveraged-buyout firm, bought the regional newspaper interests of United News & Media Plc and renamed it RIM.

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KICK START - Phoenix goalie Jimmy Waite kicks the puck out of the goal in second-period action against the Blackhawks. The game ended in a 1-1 draw. (Reuters)

Canucks trade Bure to Florida in blockbuster deal



SUNRISE, Fla. (AP) - High-scoring, high-priced holdout Pavel Bure, who told the Vancouver Canucks he would never play for them again, got his wish when he was sent to the Florida Panthers in a seven-player deal.

The three-time 50-goal scorer, who has spent the entire season at his home in Moscow, will join the Panthers in New York for games tomorrow against the Islanders and Thursday against the Rangers.

"He can lift people out of their seats with his speed and flash," Panthers general manager Bryan Murray said Sunday.

"We're also confident he'll lift the play of some of our younger players."

The Canucks also sent defenseman Bret Hedican and Brad Ference to Florida for defenseman Ed Jovanovski, centers Dave Gagner and Mike Brown and holdout goaltender Kevin Weekes.

The Panthers also will send a first-round draft choice to Vancouver in either 1999 or 2000. At that time, the Panthers will get a third-round pick from Vancouver.

Bure, 27, is a four-time all-star who immediately gives Florida its most electrifying scorer since it joined the NHL six years ago. No Panther has scored more than 32 goals in a season, by Scott Meenan in 1995-96 and Ray Whitney last year.

"There's nothing like shooting the puck on goal," Panthers coach Terry Murray said. "He has the opportunity to be a threat every time he's on the ice. I hope he'll also have an effect on some of our other players."

The Russian star scored 51 goals last season, one off the league lead. But he demanded a trade during the offseason, citing personal reasons.

Bure has also been frustrated by contract squabbles he's had since signing his last deal with the Canucks in 1994.

SUNDAY'S GAMES
Oilers 4, Red Wings 1
Edmonton celebrated center Doug Weight's return to the ice with a home win.

Weight had missed 34 games since undergoing arthroscopic surgery for a torn medial collateral ligament in his right knee in November. He was injured in October against the Washington Capitals.

Blackhawks 1, Phoenix 1
Defenseman Brad Brown's first NHL goal with 9:58 left in the third period lifted host Chicago to a tie in Sunday's only other game.

Acquired as part of a multi-player trade with Montreal in November, Brown hadn't connected in 37 previous NHL games with the Canadiens and Blackhawks.

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Philadelphia	22	10	10	54	126	86
New Jersey	23	15	5	51	121	108
Pittsburgh	20	7	17	47	117	103
N.Y. Rangers	17	19	7	41	115	120
N.H. Islanders	13	28	3	29	99	129

Northeast Division

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Toronto	25	15	3	53	140	123
Ottawa	23	13	6	52	128	94
Buffalo	22	12	7	51	114	84
Boston	19	15	7	45	107	93
Montreal	17	20	7	41	102	113

Southwest Division

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Carolina	19	17	7	45	111	106
Florida	15	15	11	41	103	108
Washington	14	22	3	35	95	105
Tampa Bay	9	30	4	22	89	151

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Central Division

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Detroit	22	19	3	47	130	118
St. Louis	16	15	9	41	107	100
Nashville	15	23	4	34	97	131
Chicago	12	25	7	31	94	138

Northwest Division

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Colorado	20	19	4	44	105	107
Edmonton	18	19	6	42	123	113
Vancouver	14	23	6	34	109	128
Calgary	14	26	4	32	107	134

Pacific Division

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Dallas	27	7	6	61	120	78
Phoenix	23	11	6	52	106	82
Anaheim	16	18	8	40	102	98
San Jose	14	18	11	39	98	102
Los Angeles	16	23	4	36	100	113

Two IOC officials deny misdeeds

LONDON (AP) - Two of the IOC's most prominent figures, including a leading presidential contender, denied any wrongdoing yesterday as their names were linked to the Olympics' biggest corruption scandal.

South Korea's Kim Un-Yong, a powerful member of the IOC executive board, and former vice president Vitaly Smirnov of Russia confirmed they were among the 13 IOC delegates under investigation in the Salt Lake City bribery case.

The two men said they had received letters from IOC investigators seeking explanations for their conduct during Salt Lake's bids for the Winter Games.

Both said they were prepared to defend themselves in person when the six-man IOC investigative panel meets in Lausanne, Switzerland, on Saturday to conclude its inquiry. The panel will make recommendations to the full executive board Sunday.

The IOC is investigating allegations that members or their relatives received cash payments, scholarships, free medical care, firearms, lavish gifts and other inducements from Salt Lake boosters.

IOC president Juan Antonio Samaranch said last week that nine members were accused of "serious" misconduct and could face expulsion. He said four others were cited for lesser violations.

Any member found guilty of corruption will be suspended pending an expulsion vote by the full IOC assembly.

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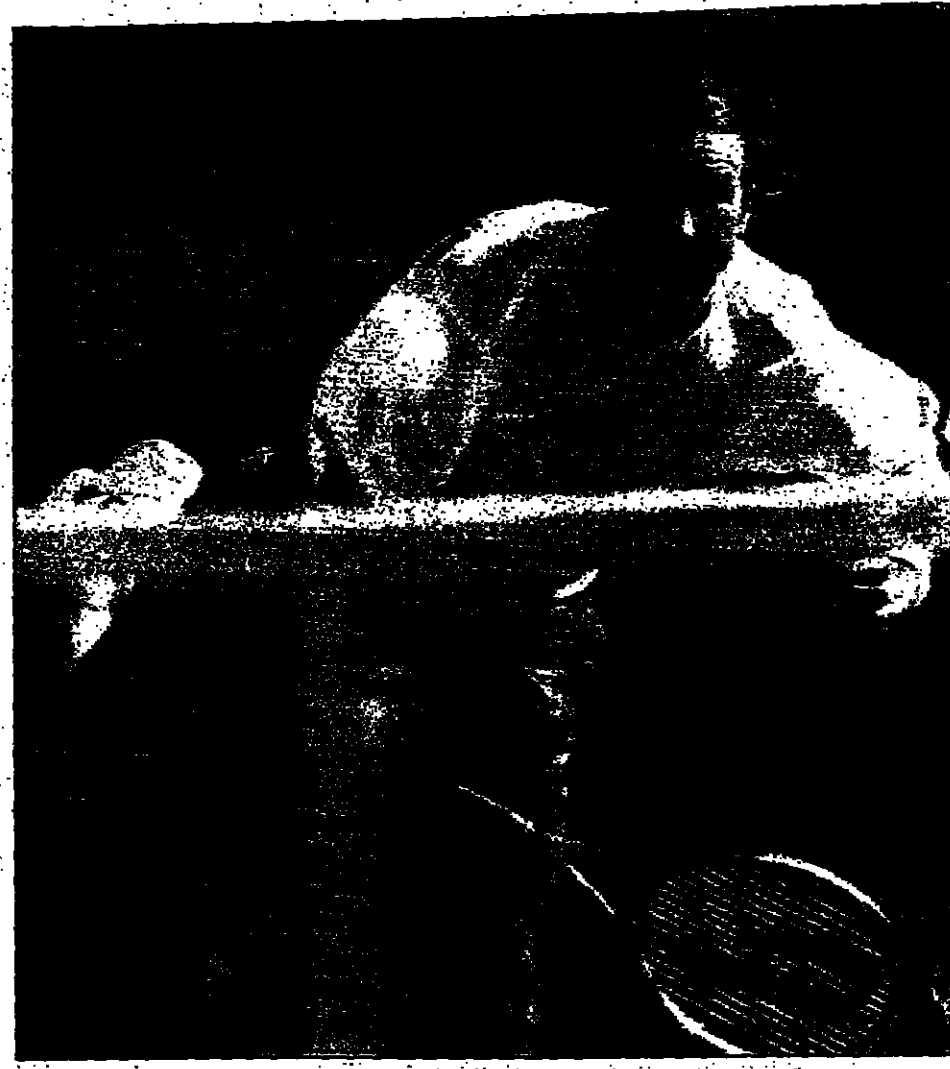
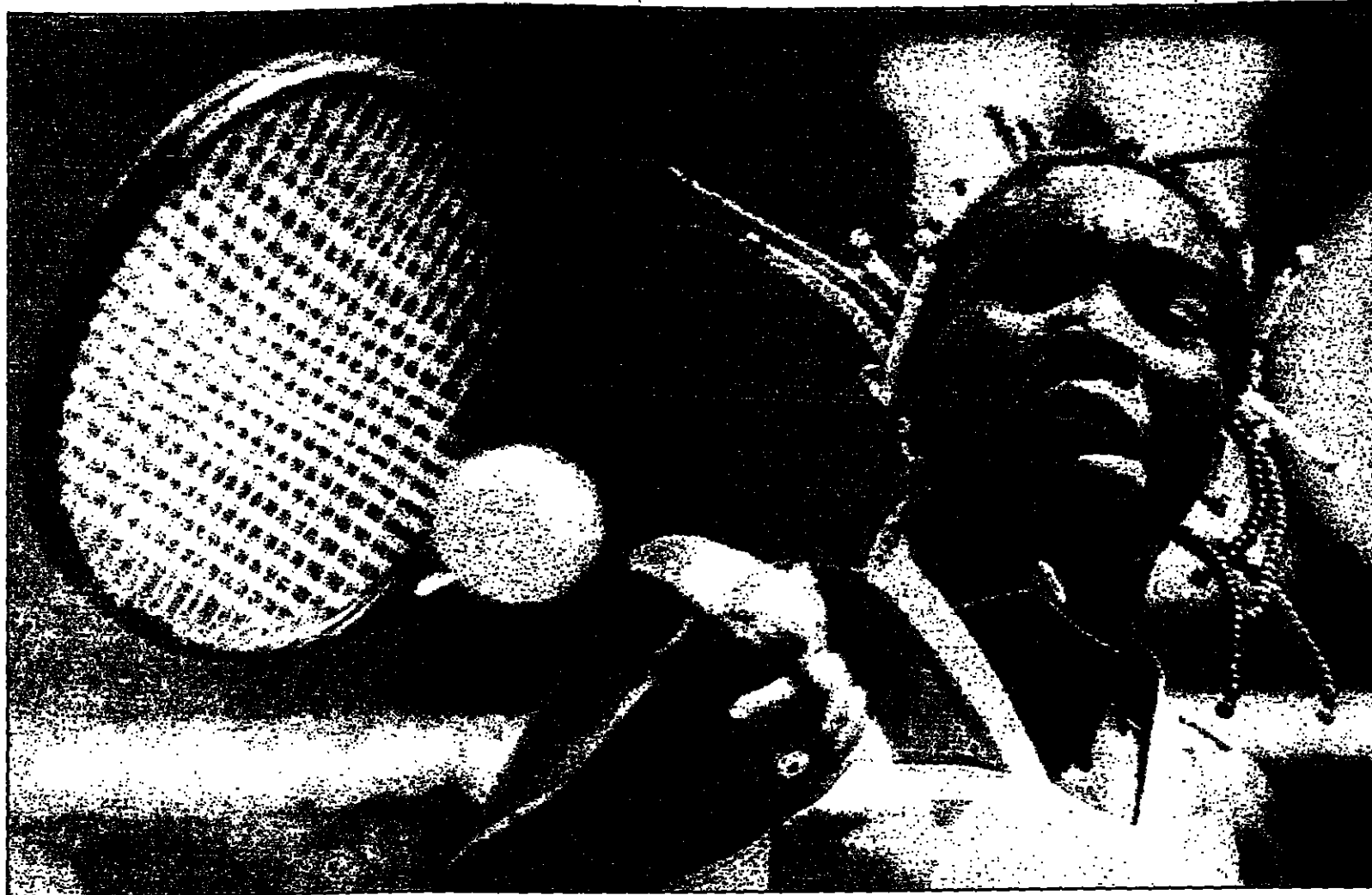
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FIRST-ROUND VICTORS - From left: Venus Williams triumphs over Croatia's Silvija Talaja in three sets; and Patrick Rafter serves during his win over Germany's Oliver Gross, whom he beat in straight sets.

Corretja, V. Williams in narrow escapes; Rios drops out

MELBOURNE (AP) - Marcelo Rios, gone. Goran Ivanisevic, gone. Alex Corretja, almost gone. With Pete Sampras staying home, the Australian Open faced some gaping holes in the men's top ranks on its first day, and came awfully close to losing Venus Williams, too.

A stress fracture in his back knocked out the top-seeded Rios, the 1998 runner-up. Doctors advised him to rest until March.

For No. 11 seed Ivanisevic, a three-time Wimbledon finalist, it was a pinched nerve in the back.

Ivanisevic's withdrawal was announced early in the day. Rios was announced after second seed Corretja had come within three points of defeat to a Japanese ranked 116th and playing in his first Grand Slam tournament.

Corretja bounced back with luck and passing shots against Takao Suzuki.

Williams, the fifth-seeded woman, was two points away from being ousted by No. 82-ranked Silvija Talaja of Croatia when she decided "this is not my fate. This is someone else's. I can't go out like

this, and I had to hold serve." She did, and won 3-6, 6-3, 9-7.

It was an easier day for the US Open champions. Lindsay Davenport, the WTA No. 1, breezed past Gala Leon Garcia of Spain 6-2, 6-2 in the first women's match on Center Court.

Third seed Patrick Rafter took the court next, and quickly beat Germany's Oliver Gross 6-2, 6-4, 6-3. Fellow Australian Mark Philippoussis, the US Open runner-up and 14th seed here, defeated American Geoff Grant 6-3, 6-4, 6-3 in a night match.

Before the appearances by Davenport and Rafter, Corretja shared center stage with Suzuki, a 22-year-old seeking to become the first Japanese man since 1989 to win a match in the Australian Open.

Suzuki, who mixed deep angles with touch shots to keep Corretja running, served for the match at 5-4 in the fourth set after slamming in four consecutive aces for 4-4 and then breaking the Spaniard with a stunning drop volley.

But Corretja rallied from that crisis, and again from 0-3 in the ensuing tiebreaker, finally winning 6-3, 4-6, 3-6, 7-6 (7-5), 6-2. "I'm a really good fighter even if I'm not playing well," Corretja said. "He just played fantastic tennis. He served unbelievably. Even his second serve was aggressive. I was almost knocked down."

The departure of Rios and Sampras' absence left Corretja, Rafter, Carlos Moya and Andre Agassi with a chance of taking over the No. 1 ranking.

Tim Henman, Richard Krajicek and Karol Kucera all won. Henman, seeded sixth, beat Karim Alami of Morocco 6-3, 6-2, 6-1. No. 9 Krajicek defeated another Moroccan, Hicham Arazi, 6-7 (4-7), 6-2, 6-4, 6-2, and No. 7

Kucera beat Fernando Vicente of Spain 6-2, 7-6 (7-4), 6-3.

Brazilian Gustavo Kuerten, the 1997 French Open champion, beat South African Marcos Ondruska 6-4, 6-3, 6-3, and Thomas Enqvist extended his 1999 winning streak to nine matches by beating American Jan-Michael Gambill 6-3, 7-6 (7-5), 6-4.

Michael Chang, a 1996 finalist who has fallen to 27th in the rankings, opened with a 7-6 (9-7), 6-3,

6-3 victory over New Zealand's Brett Steven.

Spain's Alberto Berasategui, who ousted crowd favorites Rafter and Agassi in last year's Australian Open, went out in the first round this time. He retired with cramps in the fifth set while trailing American Jeff Tarango 6-7 (4-7), 6-3, 6-7 (4-7), 6-4, 4-1.

In women's matches, Williams dumped easy forehands into the net and sprayed unforced errors in

falling behind 4-5, love-30 in the final set.

Hingis plays her first-round match today against American Lilia Osterloh.

Also starting play today will be 1998 men's champion Petr Korda, who is playing under a cloud after being spared a ban for a positive drug test at Wimbledon last year.

Wimbledon women's champion Jana Novotna opened with a 6-4, 6-2 win over Anne-Gaëlle Sidot.

First round to Smashnova

By HEATHER CHAIT

Anna Smashnova set off to a successful start yesterday, winning her first round match against Elena Tartakova from the Ukraine.

Smashnova's relied on her first serve (79%) for victory as she beat Tartakova 6-4, 6-1 in just 65 minutes.

Smashnova and Tartakova are ranked 44 and 46 respectively in the world.

Next to face Smashnova will be Eniile Loit from France, who beat Croatia's Mirjana Lucic, a result

which is probably of some relief to Smashnova, 21.

Lucic, who recently beat the Israeli player, has a ranking of 51 while Loit is at 95.

Loit demolished Lucic in exactly 40 minutes yesterday, winning 6-2, 6-1.

If Smashnova prevails against Loit, a potential third-round opponent will be ninth seed Conchita Martinez.

Success in Melbourne is not foreign for Smashnova. While the last two years saw her failing to qualify, she reached the second round in 1996 and the year before she was a third-round victim.

Rafter bewails Korda leniency

MELBOURNE (AP) - US Open champion Pat Rafter has revealed he walked out on fellow ATP Tour players at a meeting to discuss the Petr Korda drugs controversy because too many of them were avoiding the issue.

ATP Tour players met on the eve of the Australian Open to air their grievances about drugs in the sport after Korda - last year's winner - escaped a ban after testing positive to the banned steroid nandrolone.

Korda has cited special circumstances but not elaborated, triggering a player backlash and demands the Czech explain himself or be suspended.

"My opinion on that (Korda case) is I think it's probably killing the sport," Rafter said. "If someone gets tested in any other sport and they get found positive, they are out straight away. Unless Petr has got a

bloody good explanation, and we didn't hear it."

ITF backs 2-year ban

The International Tennis Federation will double its maximum ban for drug offenses after next month's International Olympic Committee conference, ITF president Brian Tabin said yesterday.

Tabin said the men's ATP and women's WTA tours have reached agreement that the ITF should fall into line with the majority of other sports under the IOC banner.

An ATP players meeting Sunday called on the ITF to increase its maximum penalty from one year to two years in the wake of Petr Korda's positive test for the steroid nandrolone at last year's Wimbledon Championships.

Tabin said the women players also had a meeting and agreed to back two-year bans.

South Africa complete crushing 5-0 win

CENTURION (Reuters) - South Africa completed their 5-0 Test humiliation of the once mighty West Indies yesterday.

Brian Lara and his demoralized team suffered their fifth successive five-day defeat - their first in 70 years of international cricket - by a massive 351 runs.

They were never in the hunt to reverse the slide as South Africa's batting decimated their once-fearful attack and set a virtually impossible winning target of 569.

Even though master fast bowler Allan Donald was absent injured, West Indies fell for 217, an embarrassing end to their first test series in the republic.

Left-arm wrist spinner Paul Adams did a splendid job in Donald's absence and was rewarded with four for 64.

Only Ridley Jacobs seemed able to stop the rot and made the top score of 78.

The West Indies resumed on 18 for one and were on the slide by lunch, taken at 85 for three. Shivnarine Chanderpaul's 43 was their best top-order effort.

Lara was dismissed for 14 in the second over after the break and he was soon followed by Carl Hooper, another veteran of the team's past achievements.

Jacobs managed to stay firm and completed his second half-century of the series as the tourists reached 216 for eight at tea.

He was finally caught behind off Jacques Kallis in the first over of the third session for his highest Test score.

He batted 113 minutes, faced 92 balls and struck 14 fours and a six.



BOWLED - Lance Klusener of South Africa celebrates after bowling out West Indies Carl Hooper.

Scoreboard

The fourth day of the fifth and final Test between South Africa and the West Indies at Centurion Park yesterday.			
South Africa first innings 312		F Rafter c Kallis b Adams	6
(M.Bochler 102, J.Kallis 83, C.Wallis 5-80)		R. Jacobs c Boucher b Kallis	78
West Indies first innings 144		N. McLaren b Adams	39
(B. Lara 68, A. Donald 5-49)		M. Dillon b Cullinan	5
South Africa second innings 390-5 decd		R. King not out	0
(S. Kirsten 134, J. Rhodes 103)		C. Wallis b Adams	0
West Indies second innings (overnight 18-11)		Extras (lb-5 nb-8)	13
P. Wallace c Boucher b Donald	4	Total (all out in 75.2)	277
D. Ganga c Rhodes b P.Boch	43	Fall of wickets: 1-4-2-46 3-88 4-88 5-88 6-117 7-188 8-202 9-216	
S. Chanderpaul c Ganga b Kallis	43	Bowling: Donald 2-0-0-1, P.Boch 18-5-28-1 (nb-5), Kirsten 10-4-40-1 (nb-2), Adams 21-2-6-4-4, Ganga 5-3-9-0, Kallis 9-5-12-2, Cullinan 7-1-32-1	
B. Lara b W. Adams	14	Results: South Africa won by 351 runs to win the series 5-0.	
C. Hooper bow b Klusener	10		

Whitewash series

CENTURION (Reuters) - West Indies 5-0 series defeat was their first and only the seventh in the 122-year history of Test cricket.

England v Australia 1920-1921, 0-5 Australia recorded the first 5-0 series win, led by Warwick "Big Ship" Armstrong, a whisky trader. At The Oval, Armstrong retired to the outfield to read a newspaper. "I was trying to find out who we were playing," he said.

Australia v South Africa 1931-1932, 5-0 Don Bradman averaged 201.5 in this series. He scored 226 not out at Brisbane, 112 at Sydney, 167 at Melbourne and 299 not out at Adelaide, when his partner was run out as Bradman attempted his 300th run. Clarrie Grimmett took 33 wickets, including 14 for 199 at Adelaide.

England v India 1959, 5-0 Just one Test, the fourth at Old Trafford, went to five days - only because England captain Colin Cowdrey decided not to enforce the follow-on. Two, at Lord's and Headingley, lasted just three days. Peter May scored 106 at Trent Bridge and Cowdrey 160 at Headingley.

West Indies v India 1961-1962, 5-0 India were without captain Nari Contractor, who fractured his skull playing Barbados. He almost died and never played international cricket again. India collapsed as Gary Sobers scored 153 and 104 at Kingston and Rohan Kanhai 138 at Kingston and 139 at Port-of-Spain.

England v West Indies 1984, 0-5 Allan Lamb's three centuries were not enough against the quartet of West Indies fast bowlers. Batsman of the summer was West Indies opener Gordon Greenidge, who scored two double centuries with support from Viv Richards, Desmond Haynes, Larry Gomes and Jeffrey Dujon.

West Indies v England 1985-1986, 5-0 West Indies captain Viv Richards scored an astonishing hundred from 56 balls in Antigua while England, with sloppy dress and voluntary nets, looked a shambles under David Gower and suffered a double whitewash.

Jansen joins Blackburn strikers

BLACKBURN (Reuters) - New Blackburn Rovers striker Matt Jansen said yesterday he was forced to leave Crystal Palace because of the financial crisis at the English first division club.

Jansen, 21, became Blackburn's sixth striker when the Premier League club paid £4 million for him.

The England under-21 striker agreed a six-year deal with Rovers only five months after signing a similar contract at Palace.

"Aston Villa and Southampton showed an interest in me during the summer and the chairman asked if I wanted to sign a long-term deal which I was happy to do," said Jansen.

"I never asked to leave Palace. It was just the financial situation there, otherwise I would have stayed."

Jansen will have to fight it out with five other strikers for a first-team slot at Rovers but does not expect to be left out of the side. "I am a confident player. I believe in my own ability and I think I am worth a place in the team."

Everyone is playing for their places but I think I can hold my own."

The arrival of Jansen has increased speculation that Brian Kidd is ready to sell one of his other strikers and assistant manager Tony Parkes admitted players will soon be leaving the club.

"You don't have to be Einstein to work out that we can't keep all of them happy when they are all fit," said Parkes.

"There may be some unrest and Brian Kidd will deal with that when it happens."

Kevin Davies, Nathan Blake and Ashley Ward have all arrived in the last few months to complement regulars Chris Sutton and Kevin Gallacher.

His proposed transfer was at the center of a row at Palace last week which led to Terry Venables giving up his coaching duties and becoming a consultant.

The former England coach moved upstairs after losing his argument with Palace chairman Mark Goldberg about the sale.

Kidd, who took over from Roy Hodgson in December, has also bought winger Keith Gillespie and is interested in Liverpool midfielder Jason McAteer and teenage midfielder Seth Johnson of first division Crewe Alexandra.

England expelled from Five Nations

TWICKENHAM (AP) - England was kicked out of rugby union's prestigious Five Nations championship yesterday in a dispute over television rights.

However, the Five Nations committee in a statement announcing its move left the door open for England's return with chairman Allan Hoggie saying we "will consult with the other Five Nations to see if the position can be resolved in the terms initially requested by the Five Nations committee."

Hoggie had set a deadline of yesterday for England to reaffirm its support for the television rights deal. The tournament opens February 6.

This is the second time England has been threatened with expulsion from the Five Nations in a dispute over television money.

In 1996, England was thrown out of the competition after it signed an independent deal with Sky television worth £87 million. Later that year, England was readmitted under a 10-year deal but forced to share part of its revenue with other members.

Francis Baron, the head of the English Rugby Football Union, said the impasse could be resolved with a meeting of rugby officials. He said he sent two faxes yesterday to Hoggie to clarify "certain points."

"We have again proposed a meeting to resolve all outstanding issues and hope that this is now taken up by the committee," Baron said. "It is essential not only for the game but also for the supporters, players, broadcasters and sponsors that we sit down and agree a way forward."

Italy is due to enter the competition next year when the Five Nations becomes the Six Nations. Hoggie has said Italy might enter this season - replacing England - if the dispute isn't resolved.

England wants the 1996 agreement declared invalid, questions how much of that revenue it should have to share and - in the light of Italy's pending entry - says the contract should be renegotiated.

The move is sure to anger sponsors and television officials as they face the threat of losing - arguably - the tournament's biggest name.

Sign-stealing scandal claims top brass

TOKYO (AP) - The president of Japan's Daiet Hawks baseball team resigned yesterday amid lingering suspicions his club systematically intercepted coded signals from rival team's catchers.

Hiroshi Murakami stepped down after investigators for the Pacific League issued a report saying "suspicions" remained that the Hawks used a TV camera to monitor opposition catchers' signs to pitchers and then informed their own batters.

The league decided earlier yesterday to suspend Murakami for six months and Hawks general manager Yasuharu Kishitani for one month over the scandal.

According to allegations, a Daiet employee monitored a TV camera installed at the Hawks' home field.

The employee allegedly picked up the catcher's signs and relayed them by walkie-talkie to a supporter in the stands, who used a megaphone to signal Daiet batters what pitches to expect next.

Bure to Panthers

Chang wins at Open



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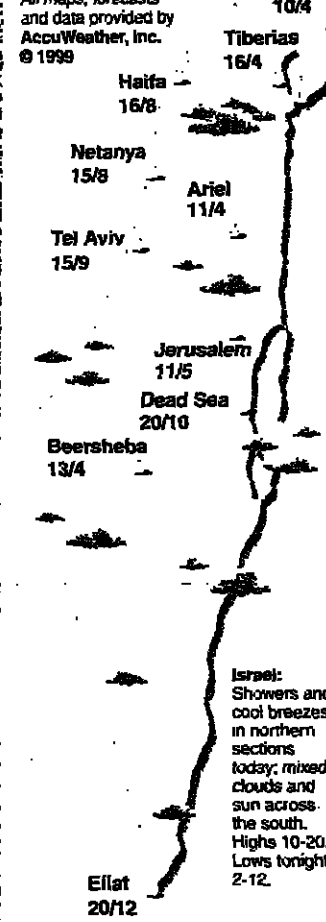
Sports Editors: Joe Hoffman & Ori Lewis

EL AL
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THE WEATHER

ISRAEL

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ISRAEL CITIES

City	Today	High	Low	High	Low
C/F	C/F	C/F	C/F	C/F	C/F
Ariel	11/52	43/39c	11/52	43/39c	
Beersheba	13/55	43/39c	13/55	43/39c	
Dead Sea	23/68	105/50	18/64	84/50c	
Eilat	31/88	125/54	18/64	105/50	
Haifa	16/61	61/45h	16/61	61/45h	
Jerusalem	11/52	54/10c	11/52	33/7c	
Katzen	10/50	43/39c	9/46	25/8	
Nahariya	15/50	54/10c	15/50	54/10c	
Tel Aviv	15/59	54/10c	15/59	74/16	
Tiberias	16/61	43/39c	14/57	43/39c	

INTERNATIONAL CITIES

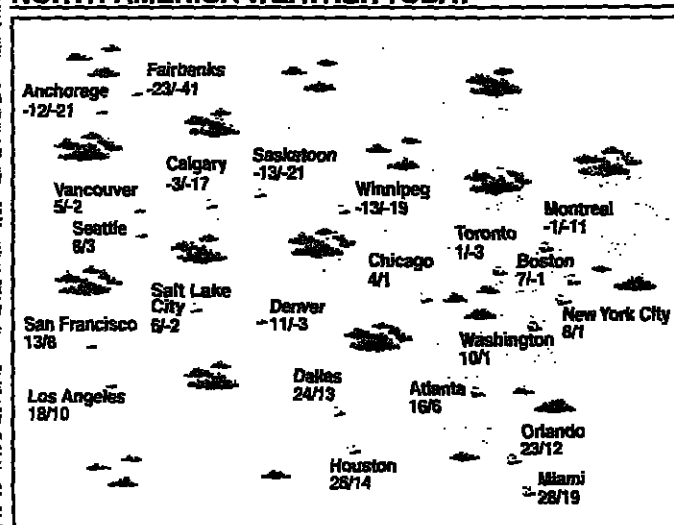
City	Today	High	Low	High	Low
C/F	C/F	C/F	C/F	C/F	C/F
Amsterdam	9/46	64/48	9/46	64/48	
Beijing	1/34	-13/19	1/34	-7/20c	
Berlin	6/43	37/7c	6/43	74/14h	
Brussels	9/46	54/10c	9/46	74/14h	
Cairo	18/64	84/50	20/68	105/50	
Chicago	4/39	10/41c	3/37	-3/27c	
Frankfurt	5/43	23/35c	5/43	54/11c	
Hong Kong	22/71	18/64c	22/71	17/62c	
Johannesburg	30/86	18/64c	28/82	18/64c	
London	11/52	9/46h	11/52	43/39c	
Los Angeles	18/64	10/50c	19/66	84/50c	
Mexico City	22/71	43/39c	21/70	74/16	
Montreal	-1/31	-11/13h	-3/27	-13/9c	
Moscow	2/35	-22/28	2/35	-10/14c	
New York	9/46	10/41c	10/50	10/41c	
Paris	9/46	61/45h	9/46	43/39c	
Prague	4/39	10/41c	7/44	23/35c	
Rio de Janeiro	31/88	24/75h	32/89	25/78h	
Rome	13/55	43/39c	13/55	43/39c	
Sydney	30/86	23/35c	28/78	18/64c	
Tokyo	14/57	12/53c	16/61	54/11c	
Toronto	1/34	-3/27c	4/39	-3/27c	
Vienna	5/43	10/41c	9/46	37/7c	
Warsaw	4/39	10/41c	7/44	23/35c	
Washington	10/50	10/41c	13/55	25/8h	
Zurich	9/43	23/35c	7/44	23/35c	

Weather (W): s-sunny, pc-partly cloudy, c-cloudy, sh-showers, t-thunderstorms, r-rain, sn-snow flurries, sn-snow, f-fog.

MOON PHASES

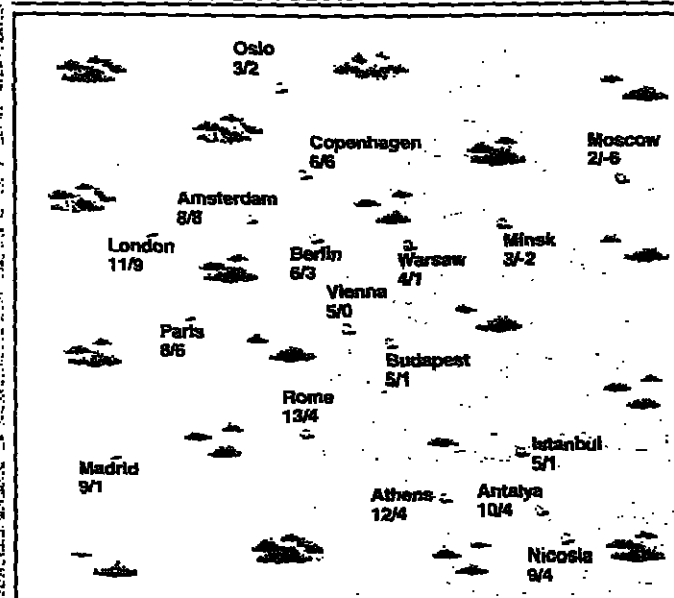
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Weekend

Jets stall out in Mile High air

Broncos end slumber to win 23-10; Parcells: We helped them quite a bit



DENVER (AP) — John Elway's Mile High sendoff ended with another trip to the Super Bowl, an emotional victory lap and pleas from his faithful fans for "One More Year." With Terrell Davis on Elway's side, the Denver fans just might get their wish.

They got a fifth AFC championship out of the Elway-led Broncos as Davis, the NFL Most Valuable Player, rushed for 167 yards and a touchdown in a 23-10 victory Sunday over the mistake-prone New York Jets.

Elway also had a touchdown pass in what probably was his final home game — he is expected to retire after the Super Bowl on January 31 in Miami.

When they get there, the Broncos, who ended a 13-year AFC slide in last year's title game, will find the Atlanta Falcons.

Former coach Dan Reeves — who once feuded with Elway and Denver coach Mike Shanahan — will be awaiting them.

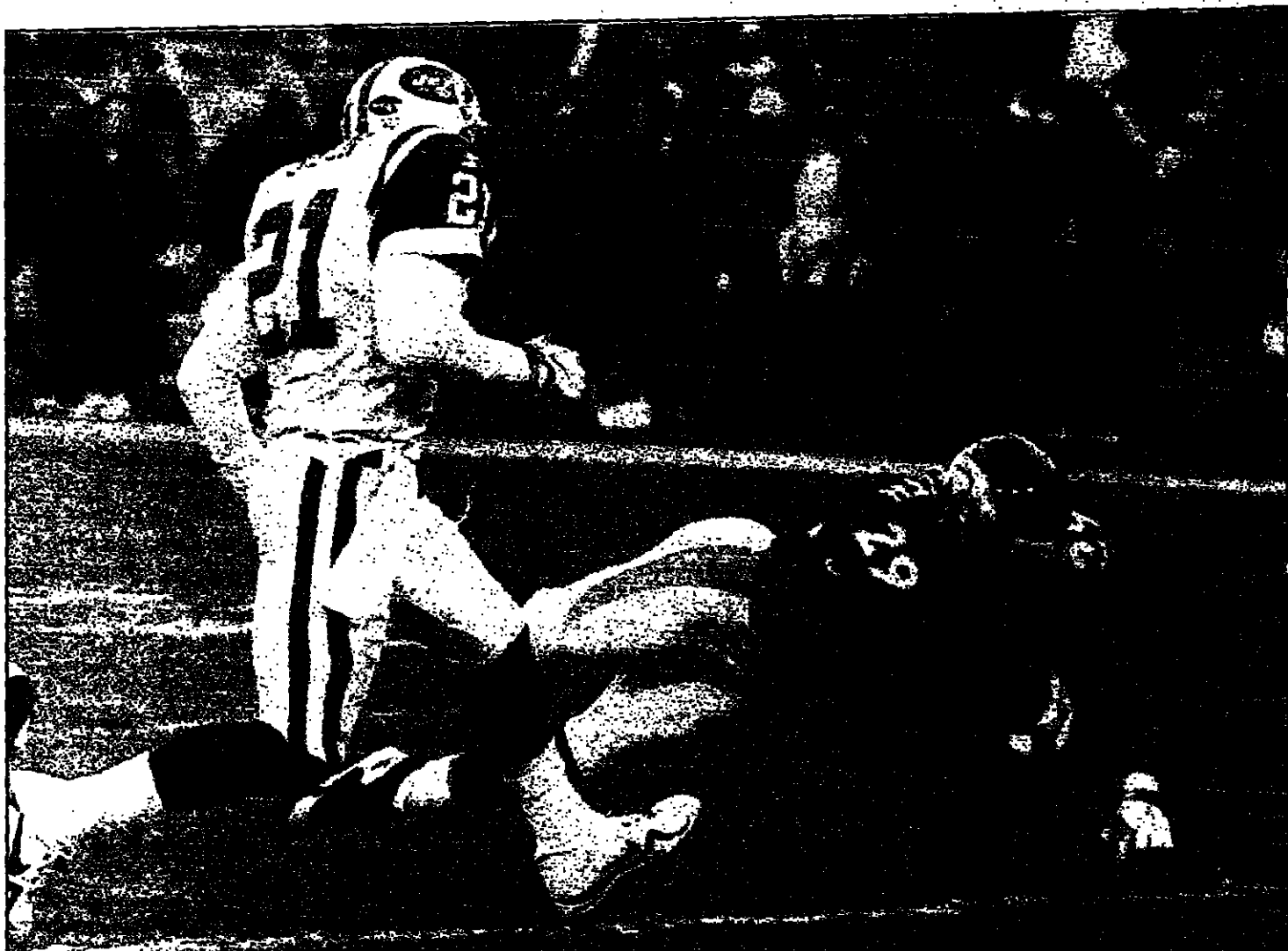
Atlanta upset Minnesota 30-27 for the NFC crown in Sunday's early game and opened as 8½-point underdogs in the Super Bowl.

Davis was the main weapon for Denver, which overcame 40 minutes of ineptitude with the kind of efficiency and spark that identifies the defending NFL champions.

The Broncos' winning method hardly was in keeping with their dominant, high-scoring image. They booted their way to a 10-0 deficit and seemed to forget about Davis. Their only effective offensive performer early on.

On the first play following Curtis Martin's 1-yard TD run after Blake Spence blocked a punt, Elway found Ed McCaffrey wide open for 47 yards. That got the usually loud crowd back into the game and, two plays later, it was fullback Howard Griffith bulging his way in on an 11-yard reception.

Jason Elam, who would make field goals of 44 and 48 yards in the third quarter to give Denver the lead, then bloomed a kickoff into a



ICEBREAKER — Broncos FB Howard Griffith (29) scores Denver's first touchdown in third-quarter action as Jets safety Victor Green moves in at left.

25 mph wind that carried just past the second wave of Jets. The ball ricocheted back toward Denver territory and was grabbed by Keith Burns.

Davis broke it open with a 31-yard TD run just 18 seconds from the end of the Broncos' 20-point third quarter.

Jets' blunders Bill Parcells warned the Jets that if they made mistakes, they would never reach the Super Bowl.

He was right. "We helped them along quite a bit," the Jets coach said. "You

can't make those mistakes and expect to win a championship game. Mistakes were the difference in the game."

The Jets lost four fumbles and two interceptions, botched a Denver kickoff, rushed for just 14 yards, blew a coverage that gave the Broncos a long gain and missed a 42-yard field goal.

The first two fumbles, by usually reliable Keith Byars and Curtis Martin, kept them from taking more than a 3-0 lead at halftime.

First, a mistake in coverage by safety Victor Green allowed John Elway to complete a 47-yard pass

to Ed McCaffrey, setting up a touchdown that made it 10-7.

Then came the most disastrous blunder. Jets return man Dave Meggett failed to field the ensuing short kickoff before James Farrior finally fumbled it away, leading to a field goal.

Parcells said the Broncos were lucky on the botched kickoff. "You can't tell me they intended to kick it that short," he said.

With the Broncos leading 20-10 in the fourth, any hope of a Jets comeback ended when Alex Van Dyke fumbled the ball away after a reception deep in Denver territory.

Sunday's AFC Championship Game
N.Y. Jets 0 3 7 0-10
Denver 10 20 3 23
Second Quarter: NY-FG Hall 32, 00. Third Quarter: NY-Martin 1 run (Hall kick), 11:56. Den-Griffith 11 pass from Elway (Elam kick), 10:18. Den-FG Elam 44, 8:23. Den-FG Elam 48, 2:58. Den-Davis 31 run (Elam kick), 18. Fourth Quarter: Den-FG Elam 35, 3:40. A-75,482.

Sunday's NFC Championship Game
Atlanta 7 7 3 10 3-30
Minnesota 13 0 7 0-27
First Quarter: At-J-Anderson 5 pass from Chandler (Anderson kick), 8:21. Min-Moss 31 pass from Cunningham (Anderson kick), 5:35. Second Quarter: Min-FG Anderson 28, 5:22. Min-Cunningham 1 run (Anderson kick), 5:22. Min-FG Anderson 33, 2:42. At-Lewis 14 pass from Chandler (Anderson kick), 5:56. Third Quarter: At-FG Anderson 27, 5:56. Fourth Quarter: Min-Patrick 5 pass from Cunningham (Anderson kick), 13:41. At-FG Anderson 24, 11:02. At-Mattie 16 pass from Chandler (Anderson kick), 4:49. Overtime: At-FG Anderson 38, 3:08. A-64,060.

Israel wallop Estonia 7-0 in friendly

By ORI LEWIS

There was only one side in the clash between Israel and Estonia at the National Stadium last night. The uncharacteristically wet turf was not a problem for the far superior Israelis as they breezed by the Estonians with seven quality goals in the opening march of the tri-nations tournament being held as part of the Israel Football Association's 70th anniversary celebrations.

The result was never in doubt, and even before the kickoff, Israel coach Shlomo Scharf made it clear that he was expecting nothing less than an outright victory. Even without three of their top players — Celta Vigo's Haim Revivo, Eyal Berkovic of West Ham and Tal Benin of Brescia — the Israelis were in total control of the match.

In the first half, the Estonians — all of whom were drafted from Flora Tallinn — hardly managed to get near the Israeli goal.

Avi Nimni opened the scoring from the penalty spot in the 17th minute after Grasshoppers Zurich's Avi Tikva was held back and brought down by an Estonian defender.

The penalty signaled the opening of the floodgates as the Israelis mounted attack after attack on Toomas Tohver's goal. Midfielder Idan Tal was particularly dominant in the goal-making as he crossed from the left for Tikva to slot home in the 29th minute, and then crossed a high ball from the

same spot for Bursaspor's Ronnen Harazi to head in on 32 minutes.

Five minutes later, Harazi headed his second goal, this time after a cross from the right from Alon Harazi. The two goals marked Harazi's 20th and 21st in national colors, making him the highest-scoring international among active players.

Israel got their fifth goal five minutes before halftime when Alon Mizrahi received a perfect chip from a Nimni free kick which left him free passage through to the Estonian goal.

Scharf made a maximum eight substitutions in the second half and the pace of the game calmed down. Although Israel lost their cutting edge, the weak Estonians still failed to find their way to the Israeli goal and 'keeper Shavit Eliemelech, who replaced Nir Davidovich in goal in the second period, was hardly tested.

The makeshift Israeli side finally gelled for two more late goals by Ofer Shitrit in the 80th minute and then by Jan Talasnikov three minutes later. Scharf, who was marking his 70th match in charge of the national team said he was not entirely satisfied with his charges. "There were patches when we played well, but there were also moments when we failed to make the most of the situations," he said.

Israel meet Norway tomorrow in the second match of the tournament (National Stadium, 18:30) and Norway take on Estonia in the final match on Friday (Unim el-Fahm, 14:00).

Villa level with leaders Chelsea

BIRMINGHAM (Reuters) — Aston Villa beat a 10-man Everton 3-0 yesterday to pull level on

years, were handicapped from the 11th minute when defender Alec Cleland was sent off after two bookings in a minute for a clumsy foul followed up by a tackle from behind.

Julian Joachim scored twice, his first coming in the 40th minute with a right-footed shot after a free-kick was headed on.

His second, high into the net, came in the 51st.

England international Paul Merson, who had a clear-the-air meeting with Villa manager John Gregory last week after he complained of being cold-shouldered, provided the home side's third on the volley from close range in the 78th minute.

Kidd's new kid, Page 18

points with Premier League leaders Chelsea and push Manchester United back down to third place. Chelsea, with 43 points from 22 matches, stayed on goal difference after beating Coventry 2-1 on Saturday.

Everton, who had not won a league game at Villa Park for 12

DiMaggio released from hospital

HOLLYWOOD, Fla. (AP) — Joe DiMaggio was released from the hospital yesterday after spending 99 days in the intensive care unit for treatment of lung cancer and pneumonia.

His lawyer, Morris Engelberg, said the 84-year-old DiMaggio was "looking forward to opening day in Yankee Stadium in April."

His release from Memorial Regional Hospital marked an incredible recovery for the Yankee Clipper, who was near death several times and was even administered last rites.

"Mr. DiMaggio wishes to express his thanks to the doctors, ICU nurses and staff at Memorial Regional Hospital, for helping him recover from infectious

pneumonia, as well as to the 250 million people of there who are praying for him," Engelberg said in a statement.

DiMaggio, voted baseball's greatest living player in 1969, entered the hospital October 12 and had surgery two days later to remove a cancerous lung tumor. He had a series of setbacks after a serious infection set in.

On December 10-11, DiMaggio was in a coma and near death, with Dr. Earl Barron calling it a "very dire situation." DiMaggio's family came to his bedside but the Hall of Famer came out of the coma.

"It's completely unexpected," Barron said at the time, attributing the turnaround to a decision to administer an antibiotic intravenously.

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